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TRB

from Washington ®
April 24, 1976

President Veto

Nine years ago American cities were turbulent. There were six days of racial violence in Newark, and 26 people killed; disorder in Cincinnati, in Nashville, in Cambridge, Maryland. The President sent 4800 troops into Detroit. Congress investigated; was it a Red plot?

The year before, 1966, Sargent Shriver warned that cuts in the Office of Economic Opportunity and similar agencies would have "great and grave" effects. These appeared punctually as the ghettos erupted. The always conservative House minority leader, Jerry Ford, smelled communism. "I can't help but believe that there is in the background some national plan," he observed of the disorders.

Senator Robert Kennedy said, "Today the army of the dispossessed and disenchanted sits in every major city, in every region and section of the country." Ex-Assistant Secretary of Labor Pat Moynihan saw the emergence of an "urban lower class" whose upward thrust was a social as well as a racial phenomenon. Four national black leaders pleaded against the riots: Martin Luther King, Jr., A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young. King, of course, was soon to be shot down; then there were more riots.

Violence is beneath the surface of public life; always waiting. The curious thing is that economic circumstances during these clashes of the '60s were better than they are today. Unemployment in 1967 was way down—below four percent; 7.4 percent for blacks. Today the unemployment level is around 7.5 percent; the current official estimate of black teenage unemployment is an almost incredible 35.9 percent. But where are the riots, the upward pressure? Forces are cushioned partly, perhaps, by general assistance programs, by unemployment insurance, by food stamps. The country has forgotten what happened a few years back; we hope it will last, that the poor will remain patient. The presidential candidates generally tiptoe around the sensitive issue, particularly race. When Jimmy Carter stubs his toe on the taboo subject of "ethnic purity" his rivals rejoice, but few take up the real issue of segregated suburbs around decaying central cities. The silence is as complete and Victorian as it would be if a child at a garden party brightly announced to the hostess, "Ma, that drain is overflowing again"!

Great domestic issues cry for discussion in this election but aren't being discussed; maybe they will be later, after the primaries. The Democrats have a big opportunity if they can find a candidate who can put it all together. Curiously enough, so far it's Mr. Ford who comes closest to the vital matters, though generally by declaring what he won't let Congress do.

Mr. Ford is wonderfully benefited by having Ronald Reagan as an antagonist. He makes the President look good. Reagan explained the other day, "There is only one cause for inflation: government spending more than government takes in." A statement like that makes Mr. Ford look profound, and after one of his sparring matches with the governor he seems a strong, decisive leader.

If and when Reagan is disposed of, the real battle will start, and it will center on the Ford vetoes. They symbolize in 1976 the historic political cleavage between the parties over the role of government to the economy and to the individual. Who will articulate the Democrats' side? It is a complicated subject and Hubert Humphrey, for one, is raring to go.

One reason America's big cities are so quiet is the rather disconcerting one that we are spending enormous sums in general assistance programs to keep them quiet. These jumped 21.4 percent last year to the startling figure of $27.8 billion. Is it too high? Of course it is; it is high because unemployment is high, and for every one percent increase in unemployment there is a corresponding loss of $14 billion in federal tax revenues and an additional cost of two billion dollars for unemployment compensation. If we could cut unemployment back to 1967 levels, we could save the government $59 billion and cancel the deficit. As economist Walter Heller said on "Meet The Press" the other day, "We are $150 billion below our output potential; it is just ridiculous not to make faster use of that unused potential."

The economy is improving, at a slow rate, and it should help Mr. Ford in the election, for inevitably the trend of the economy is more important to the voters than the actual level. The difficulty is that the recovery is slow, and that Mr. Ford has repeatedly seemed to be putting on the brakes. Democrats argue that it is they who have stimulated recovery, over the President's veto. The voters can decide that.

The recession isn't over, of course. There have been six postwar recessions, and we are still below the trough (low point) of the other five. This Nixon-Ford recession is the deepest in 40 years.

Walter Heller and liberal economists could be wrong; they consider the Ford hold-the-line budget inadequate and warn of continued recession next year with continued extraordinary unemployment. The latter is actually budgeted for in the projections of the Ford stable of conservative economists.

Mr. Ford isn't ashamed of his vetoes, he proclaims them. It has been government-by-veto, often near stalemate, since he took office and it will so continue if he is elected for he will almost certainly have another Democratic Congress. "I will veto them again, and again, and again," he tells audiences. As this is written his score is 48, in 20 short months, with others in line ahead like advancing telephone poles. Nixon had only 43 vetoes; Herbert Hoover, 37; Johnson, 30. This is a new kind of government.

Mr. Ford makes it the issue and rejoices in it, against "those reckless spending bills." Like Reagan, he argues that spending causes inflation, though he doesn't make it the sole cause. He attacks the bureaucrats as do some Democrats. (It would be nice just once to hear somebody recognize the disinterested devotion with which many abused bureaucrats serve their country.)

Vetoes by Ford include school lunch and veterans' bills, strip mining and air pollution controls, federal aid to the indigent and idle, public employment, housing subsidies, public works, aid for the handicapped, tax cuts, job training and many others. If ever there was a set-up for a fiery attack by an opposition party, this is it.

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Sticks And Stones

Most of our readers had already seen Ken Bode's explanation of "Why Carter's Big with Blacks" (*TNR*, April 10) before the headlines turned analysis to ashes. In the issue dated April 17, Henry Fairlie argued (also in an article written before "ethnic purity" burst into America's political vernacular) that Jimmy Carter had "the glow beyond energy," and that he had come out of the South with "no scars." We don't know what our friend Fairlie thinks now that Carter has produced grotesque evidence that—whether he had simply let down his guard or was playing for the homeless Wallace vote—he is far less decent than the South whose best son he purports to be.

Carter's remarks are now on the record: no amount of apologizing or backtracking will obscure the fact that he was capable of language more reminiscent of European racism than of American, and the more jarring because it came from the lips of a Democrat who had plausibly claimed he could unite more than he would divide. Carter's entourage, having glimpsed their personal mountain tops, are now scurrying to find blacks willing to forgive and forget—or at least explain away. In Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Sr. told a black rally for Carter he had a "forgiving heart." A few others, certainly, will also be available.

But Rep. Andrew Young (D, Ga.) owes us all more than his observation that ugly themes like "black intrusion," "alien groups" and "diametrically opposite kind of family" may be disastrous to Carter's fortunes. He owes us this more normative judgment because of who he is. Young is the one near-Tolstoyan figure in American politics; it is primarily his cachet that has gained Carter whatever hearing he has gotten (and will get) from liberals. It is the trust that Young earned as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s principal aide and confidant—and because he is an unusually gentle and persuasive man—that gave credibility to his judgment that one should trust Carter.

Young argues that Carter's gubernatorial record was far from racist, that given a range of choices he consistently chose the most liberal. But the Atlanta congressman concedes that Carter is "primarily an engineer without deep philosophical commitments." That means that Young also has made a leap of faith for Jimmy. This engineer is likely to find the goal of a just and integrated society the least easy to pursue, and especially hazardous because, wittingly or not, he has fanned the fires of segregation.

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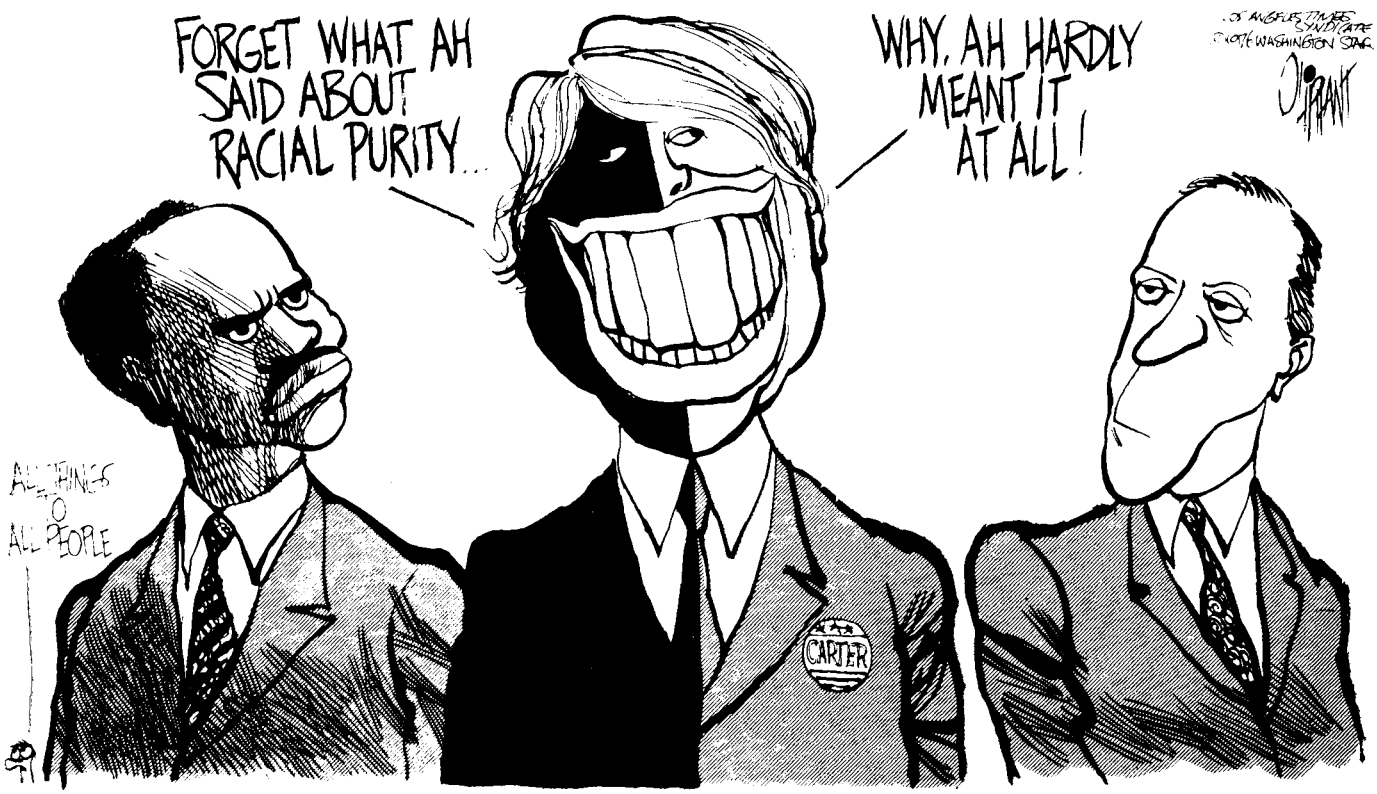
Unlike Julian Bond who, being rather more cynical, was for Carter "only against Wallace and only in Florida"—and who today rues even that grudging support—Young has gone to the country for his candidate and written a very personal statement, "Why I am for Carter" (*The Nation*, April 3), which was cited to persons skeptical about New South politicians. In the circumstances, also, those liberal and left trade unionists who have moved toward Carter can no longer justify their choice simply by the fact that their nemesis George Meany prefers someone else.

It is hard to put a redeeming twist on Carter's words or, for that matter, on the vaguely supportable thoughts about neighborhoods being able to retain distinctive character that some of his partisans now say were his real intentions. For there is nothing in Carter's record nor in the vision of America that he has projected suggesting any deep appreciation of how a genuine pluralism of cultures can preserve people's individuality and at the same time enrich us all. That is, there is no way that one can interpret "ethnic purity"—even if it did not smack of Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Alfred Rosenberg—as ethnic identity. In any case, maintaining ethnic identity, which means preserving dying languages and folk arts, reviving faltering patterns of child-rearing and family structure, restoring attitudes toward work and mobility long in decline, would require something more complicated than persistent residential segregation. One suspects also that this deeper pluralism of life styles and spirit would not sit well with the authoritarian and homogenizing tendencies of American nativism that Carter evokes. This is, after all, what Carter's defenders mean when they say patronizingly that he is "just a small-town Georgia boy." It may well be that he has actually emancipated himself from these prejudices about what is authentically America; but his perception of desirable differences is so shallow that no government program will threaten it. The Italian grocery, the Jewish delicatessen, the Chinese restaurant will survive even the most extensive public intervention aimed at bringing about integration.

Though Carter continually says that he will not tell a lie, as if telling the truth were so difficult and remarkable, both his prime offending phrase and the revisionist interpolations were intended to deceive. In city after US city, there are ethnic pockets in which Greeks and Armenians and Lebanese, or Poles and Slovaks and Ukrainians live cheek by jowl. If it ever existed, the "purity" of these neighborhoods disappeared long ago and is not imperiled today. These ethnic groups mix easily and do not feel threatened by each other. What Carter was telling them, in code, was that he would protect not the ethnic, but the *racial* character of their areas, that blacks would not, under his presidency, become their neighbors or their children's classmates. This has nothing at all to do with ethnicity, just now a fashionable theme in our national life, and also a salutary one. Carter is trying to have this theme bear the burden of his first remarks. In the panic to restore his good name, he is also continually and casually abusing words and ideas. Will someone who does that not also abuse people?

It is widely taken for granted that Carter's comments and their implications will hurt him in the contest



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ahead. No doubt they will retard the drift to him by many liberals—otherwise suspicious of Jackson, unconvinced by Udall, and reluctant to cast their lot yet again with Humphrey. But it is not clear how much his words will hurt him among other voters in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, large industrial states where economic and social insecurities keep racial fears alive. That is why Jackson and Udall—having righteously dissociated themselves from Carter's egregious phrases—are being careful not to enunciate an activist federal housing policy that would actually break down barriers between blacks and whites. It is no easy matter to formulate concrete and specific integration programs, in either housing or education. But it would be manifestly unfair if Carter were to take the rap for what he has said and for the other candidates—and Hubert Humphrey as well—to get off scot-free, relieved by his callousness of any obligation to reveal how they propose to bridge the great divide between the races.

As of now, in fact, the active candidates have been evading the real issue by carving out political positions against federally subsidized high-rise housing in neighborhoods of one- and two-family homes. But no one is really for that any more. It is a non-issue, on which one can still score cheap points. There are, however, other policy alternatives, and they will become more urgent as jobs continue to flee the inner city leaving our racial minorities without employment or adequate housing. The truth is that virtually the only "pure" neighborhoods left in our country are those where the black and Chicano poor live together and alone, cut off from both work and hope.

Sitting Ducks

Every two years since 1970, a Washington-based lobbying group called Environmental Action has run an election effort known as the "Dirty Dozen" campaign. The organization aims to defeat 12 congressmen with bad environmental records, and so far claims a 77 percent success rate. The Dirty Dozen list was inaugurated in 1970 after "Earth Day," when many environmentalists were a bit naive. Says Dennis Bass, director of Environmental Action's DD effort, "Everybody was talking about savings birds and bees . . . we've matured a lot since then. We recognize now that there are a lot of other concerns in this country and that we have to strike a balance."

Bass says his group has grown. In '70 and '72 the DD list was really only a media project, originating in Washington and depending for its impact on local newspapers and on the candidates in each district. Of the 22 congressmen named to the list in those two years, 11 were defeated while on the list. The biggest trophy for Environmental Action was the scalp of Rep. Wayne Aspinall (D, Colo.), chairman of the House Interior Committee, defeated in 1972.

In '74 the effort got bigger: $15,000 was raised. Rather than making direct contributions to candidates challenging the Dirty Dozen, Environmental Action used its money to sponsor its own independently run effort. So in '74 the group sent its staff to the 12 districts to organize local groups against incumbents. That year eight of 12 representatives were defeated. Encouraged by this *apparent* success, the campaign increased its 1976 budget to $25,000.

It would seem the group is influential in defeating anti-environmentalists in Congress; the problem is, many things affect a congressional race. Just because the incumbent is defeated doesn't mean Environmental Action did him in.

This year's "Dozen" was chosen on the basis of 14 House votes. As many as 155 congressmen voted "correctly" only four or fewer times on these issues. Included were votes on strip mining, energy, pesticide control and transportation. One issue causing some wonderment was an unsuccessful 1974 amendment that would have provided abortion aid to indigent mothers. It was a vote for population control, and thus an environmental issue, but one rather muddled by religious and ethical complexity.

If the only criterion were stands on issues, the Dirty Dozen would have to be the Filthy 150. Other matters of a more pragmatic nature are considered, particularly the vulnerability of the incumbent—freshmen without secure districts or veterans with slim winning margins are appealing targets. Many congressmen escape the distinction for lack of a potent challenger. Assuming it will have little impact in such districts, the DD effort has shied away from attacking the entrenched, knowing that any group that picks only the tough races soon finds that its winning record is poor and it's harder to raise money.

When Wayne Aspinall was first elected to the House in 1948, he had a safe district on the western slope of Colorado. But in 1970, redistricting brought him further east, and by 1972 only a quarter of his old constituents were left in his district. Once invulnerable, Aspinall was ready for the old heave-ho when he was named one of the Dirty Dozen in 1972.

In the eight races where challengers won against DD congressmen in 1974, Bass believes that the DD efforts were critical in only three—in Iowa where Tom Harkin beat William Scherle, in Indiana where Andrew Jacobs regained the seat he had lost in '72 to William Hudnut, and in New Jersey where James Florio beat John Hunt. Asked if the DD staff had an impact on his successful campaign, one congressman replied, "No, as a matter of fact I tried to stay away from them." When Floyd Fithian (D, Ind.) campaigned against Dirty Dozener

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Earl Landgrebe, he only mentioned the DD label in campaign fliers passed out on three university campuses, doubting that in the rest of his predominantly rural district, the DD would help much.

The DD campaign has its greatest impact in districts with raging local environmental issues. When Tom Harkin challenged incumbent William Scherle in Iowa, a proposed dam in the district was already a major issue, and Harkin could exploit that. Local groups were organized by the DD representative to work against Scherle, and Harkin won by only 3500 votes. DD organizers were considered critical.

Nobody thinks that environmental action can, on a budget of $25,000, make or break 12 congressmen every two years. By choosing weak congressmen in districts where the environment is already an issue, victories are maximized. The 41 congressmen who have been named to the list since 1970 all deserved the honor; their environmental records were poor. But they were the 41 who had the best chance of being defeated, sitting ducks as it were.

William Straus

Prurient Interest in Memphis

One day this week the lights in a Memphis theater will dim, the audience will hush, and on the screen in almost-living color will be Linda Lovelace, acting in seeming violation of the laws of physics, and perhaps also Title 18 of the US Code. Porno audiences are usually a quiet lot, but this one may be even quieter than most; decorum must be maintained at all times in the federal courts, and US District Judge Harry W. Wellford is said to insist on it while he is on the bench.

What the audience will be seeing is a print of *Deep Throat*, the government's chief exhibit in the case of the *United States* v. *Peraino et al*, which is a part of the longest, established, (seemingly) permanent porno show on the federal circuit, and which is now being staged in this Bible Belt city on the Mississippi. After four years of investigation that involved hundreds of witnesses, scores of FBI agents, and unspecified—but clearly massive—amounts of federal money, the local US attorney's office is midway through a series of 10 obscenity trials that are stacked up on the local court calendar like shuttle flights over LaGuardia. They began last September and are expected to run into next autumn.

In all, more than 60 persons and corporations have been indicted, the basic charge being a conspiracy to ship "an obscene, lewd, lascivious and filthy motion picture film" across state lines. The films have ranged from blurry 8 mm. films of the black-socks genre (most of which are characterized by a lack of screen credits and anything resembling a plot) up to and including such porno classics as *Deep Throat*, the current attraction, and *The Devil in Miss Jones*, first scheduled to open April 12, but now postponed to June 1 because of the extended run of *Deep Throat*.

While the trials are being held in Memphis, most—in fact, virtually all—the defendants are from elsewhere. Many of them had never been in Tennessee, and are not even charged with shipping a film into Memphis. They are accused of being involved in a nationwide conspiracy to transport obscene films across state lines, even though—in at least 17 cases—Tennessee was not one of the states.

The man most responsible is Larry Parrish, 32, a handsome, hard-working assistant US attorney, who gets high marks from defense lawyers for his intelligence and drive, but who also is said to be a bit of a fanatic about porno films. Parrish insists this is not a personal crusade; the law is on the books, he says, and he is simply enforcing it. But others believe that Parrish, an active member of a local evangelical church, is on a personal mission to destroy the porno film industry. "He thinks these films poison our society, so he's out to get people out of the business," says Robert Eugene Smith, of Atlanta, one of the score of defense lawyers in these trials.

Parrish, who spent a year and a half in Washington as a staff lawyer at the Federal Trade Commission, argues that conspiracies to transport obscene films are no different from conspiracies to violate the antitrust laws. Thus, while the Supreme Court ruled that "communities" may set their own standards, he says, it did not say that the federal government couldn't prosecute interstate transportation of dirty movies; "to hold that would be to wipe out the commerce clause."

Most of the defendants *are* charged with conspiring to ship films into Memphis, but many are not, and the defendants include one man accused of shipping a film from Boston to Ascutney, Vermont. The legal theory is that if a film is held obscene by a grand jury in Memphis, then anyone anywhere in the country who helped make, produce or distribute the film may be involved in a conspiracy to violate the laws against transporting obscene films across state lines. And because of this, dozens of producers, distributors and even, in two cases, actors have been summoned from New York, Miami, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Minneapolis and other places for lengthy, costly trials in this Mississippi River town whose community standards are such that local reporters have had trouble getting the *titles* of some of the films into their papers; *Let's Lick Dick* was a particular problem.

Justice Department officials in Washington, as well as Parrish and his boss, US Attorney Thomas Turley, insist the trials are neither (a) a scheme to drag porno dealers into a place where they are more likely to be

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convicted, or (b) an attempt to bankrupt small distributors by subjecting them to lengthy trials far from home. But the location is nonetheless a sore point with many defendants. As one defense lawyer, Leonard Cohen, of Arlington, Virginia, put it: "We are at a loss to understand why, to begin with, the United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee would desire to prosecute a conspiracy of this magnitude where, under the indictment, most of the defendants had no connection whatever with his district."

To defend the indicted men and corporations, an impressive array of legal talent has been mobilized, ranging from Bruce Kramer, a local ACLU attorney who sometimes wears a "Porn Is Fun" button under his jacket, to such high-priced figures as Smith and his associate, Gilbert Deitch, of Atlanta, and former Watergate special prosecutor James Neal, of Nashville. For those charged with shipping films into Memphis, the basic defenses are that the movies are not obscene, and that in any event there was no conspiracy. For those charged only with a general conspiracy, the common defense is that they should be indicted—if at all—in their own communities or in places where they actually distributed the films.

Neal and most others have argued in pretrial briefs that a nationwide conspiracy to distribute obscene films is a contradiction in terms, because—unlike stolen cars, or narcotics, which are contraband everywhere—a film may or may not be legally "obscene" depending on where it is exhibited.

More troublesome to Kramer, who is representing porn star Harry Reems in the *Deep Throat* case, is the precedent that could be set if Parrish has his way. Reems made only $100 on the film, and had nothing to do with the distribution or promotion of it, he says. Yet if Reems can be held responsible for the actions of all the others in the alleged conspiracy, "this means that writers and actors and artists of all sorts can be prosecuted in places like Memphis, and this has to have a chilling effect."

To date, three trials have been completed, one ending in a hung jury (it will be retried) and two ending in convictions of 10 individuals and corporations. All convictions to date have been appealed, and it is likely that the central issues will be settled not in Memphis, but in higher courts.

The defendants and their lawyers insist that prosecutors in Memphis are assaulting the First Amendment. Parrish and his boss, however, argue that the real issue is the commercialization of sex. "If the (appellate) courts eventually say this is not so, we'll go on to something else," says Turley. "But if this isn't obscenity, I don't know what the hell is."

Anthony Marro

Mr. Marro is with the *Newsweek* bureau in Washington.

Ellen McCormack's Right to Funds

Ellen McCormack is not the first single-issue candidate to run for office, nor is her platform the first to have backing from a church. In every election year from 1872 to 1940, for example, the American Prohibition party offered up its own candidate for the presidency, and various Protestant sects provided foot soldiers for the campaign: ministers were mobilized and mobilized others. Until this year public funds had never gone to any candidates; but when McCormack's Pro-Life Action Committee was certified by the Federal Election Commission on February 25 to receive $100,000 in matching funds, an unanticipated consequence of the campaign financing law suddenly manifested itself. Public money had gone to a single-issue candidate who in this case is less a contender for the Democratic presidential nomination than a promotional opportunity for the anti-abortion movement, which happens also to be the major political concern of the Roman Catholic Church.

For all McCormack's efforts to dispell her image as a single-issue candidate—including spending more than $10,000 for television commercials on such issues as government spending—she was and continues to be a political extension of the anti-abortion movement. Last September, McCormack set the tone for her campaign by calling for contributors to "Fight Abortion and Save Babies' Lives" in a series of advertisements in such Catholic newspapers as San Diego's *Southern Cross*. The ads described her candidacy as a chance for "some of our tax dollars to help save babies instead of killing them." "McCormack," one ad explained, "is running for President in order to raise enough money to bring pro-life commercials to the nation through television."

Her Pro-Life Action Committee—first active in Barbara Keating's unsuccessful bid as a Conservative party candidate in New York's 1974 Senate race—consists of nine Long Island housewives with little or no campaign organization outside New York. To raise almost $160,000 in the months before McCormack requested matching funds in February, the committee worked closely with individuals involved in local church parishes and in existing right-to-life groups. In fact, the election commission certified her only after a week-long investigation to discover whether McCormack's supporters knew they were giving to a presidential campaign and not to a pro-life group.

In granting McCormack matching funds, spokesman David Fiske said, the commission stayed "as far away as possible" from the big question: whether or not a single-issue candidate should be entitled to taxpayer support in a general election. But that is the issue the commission's decision raises. Does McCormack's candidacy open the way for the National Rifle

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Association, the National Organization for Women, or the Emergency Committee for Soviet Jewry to raise similar funds in the name of similar candidates running in the name of issues they support? If one sets down universally applied technical requirements for qualifying, it is difficult to see how this could be otherwise, and hard to argue that it should be.

Anti-abortionists have not limited their activity exclusively to the McCormack effort. They provided a hefty proportion of Jimmy Carter's victory in the Iowa precinct caucuses and generated some of the pressure that led President Ford to announce his support for an amendment returning authority over abortion to the states. The new visibility of abortion in presidential politics is neither the final nor the most important goal of the movement, however. The real objective, according to pro-life activists, is to elect a Congress that will enact a human life amendment to the Constitution in 1977. McCormack's poor showing in national politics does not accurately reflect the impact that anti-abortionists are likely to have in congressional elections later this year.

Since the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on constitutional amendments turned down proposals for an amendment last fall, the anti-abortionist movement has relied less on national lobbying efforts and more on local activities. McCormack's candidacy suggests that groups like her own Pro-Life Action Committee are more ambitious and professional in 1976 than ever before. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church is launching a major effort to provide those groups with new direction and new organization in the election year. At its annual conference in Washington, DC last November, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted a "Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities" that calls specifically for political action at the local level. The plan urges the establishment in every congressional district of "well organized pro-life units." The National Committee for a Human Life Amendment—a Washington lobbying organization supported almost entirely by the donations of Catholic bishops—provides technical assistance to right-to-life groups across the country on how to lobby most effectively on the home ground of elected representatives.

Earlier this year, Iowa's precinct caucuses illustrated the resources available to candidates who support the pro-life cause. On the Sunday before delegates were actually selected, every Catholic church in the diocese of Des Moines was asked to hold "demonstration" caucuses to familiarize voters with the political process, and every parish priest was asked to establish a "parish contact person" responsible for getting out the vote. In some states, the mere prospect of similar activity may influence the stands that congressional and state candidates will take on abortion. In Illinois, for example, 125 candidates for the state legislature and 29 candidates for the House of Representatives have said they would support a human life amendment. In states like Maryland, where none of the announced congressional candidates supports the pro-life cause, Maryland's two right-to-life groups plan to enter their own candidate in the race. McCormack's campaign, invigorated by public funds, suggests that there may be more single-cause activists running for office in the near future. Though new campaign legislation passed in the House and Senate limits public financing to presidential races, support is still growing for separate legislation to extend public financing to congressional candidates. Such legislation would make the precedent set by McCormack's campaign all that much more attractive to single-issue organizations. It would give groups like the anti-abortion movement, whose real strength lies not on the national but the local level, a chance to have much more than an "educational" impact on American politics.

John Taft

Mr. Taft, a senior at Yale, works for *National Journal*.

White House Watch

The Woodstein Flap

The pitch that Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the *Washington Post* reporters who did more than any other journalists and any officials did to expose the evil of Watergate and drive Richard Nixon from the presidency, used with some of the 394 sources that they boast of having drawn upon for *The Final Days* (Simon and Schuster; $10.95) was that they'd written some pretty rough and marginal stuff in their Watergate news stories and were going to make up for it in this book with a reasoned and balanced account of Nixon's twilight and departure from the White House. My reading of the book is that they tried and failed to do this. The book is fascinating. It is beautifully done (I'd like to know more than they tell about the contribution of "Alice Mayhew, our editor," who is thanked "for the hundreds of hours she spent with us and with this manuscript"). It tells much that I never learned during what I think it's fair to say was as close a watch as any reporter kept upon the Nixon presidency. And in my biased opinion it is on the whole the worst job of nationally noted reporting that I've observed during 49 years in the business.

In this opinion I differ with most of the Nixon people who figure in the book and with whom I've had time and opportunity to check. Most of these people say four things. First, they don't want to be identified as

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Woodward and Bernstein—"Woodstein" in the current Washington argot—sources. Second, they don't want whatever they say about the accuracy or inaccuracy of the book and of the references to them to be attributed to them. Third, and with some exceptions, they consider the book to be "basically accurate." I must have heard that said 20 times in the week or so preceding the writing of this piece. Fourth, and also with some exceptions, they hold that the book exaggerates, over-dramatizes and occasionally distorts what the people whose view is reflected here say they told Woodstein. That's where I part with these people. They are more tolerant than I am of exaggeration, over-dramatization and distortion.

Finally, and for a thoroughly selfish reason, I object to the abuse of a method of reporting that Woodstein brag about and practice throughout the book. I object because, damn it all, it's my method. Woodstein never once attribute a statement to the source or sources of the statement. They and their research assistants interviewed on what journalists call a background basis and they write from background, on their own authority. So do I, usually and by preference. But the effect of piling statement upon unattributed statement for 450 pages is to give a good method a bad name. Two examples of the absurd lengths to which the device is carried are a long conversation reported in direct quotation between Nixon and his press secretary, Ronald Ziegler, as if Woodstein were in the room with them, and the direct quotation of a remark that one of Nixon's lawyers, Leonard Garment, made in chambers to Judge John Sirica. The Nixon-Ziegler conversation is from the transcript of a Nixon tape published by the House Judiciary Committee. The Garment remark ("Just wait") is from a published court transcript. The Woodstein claim when they were writing their Watergate stories in *The Washington Post* and their earlier book, *All the President's Men*, that they reported only what at least three sources had told them greatly wearied me. In this book, they profess to report only what they've been told by "at least two people." That is crap. What second source could confirm that Henry Kissinger, Fred Buzhardt, David Gergen, Pat Buchanan, Leonard Garment, Ronald Ziegler—naming a few of the many who are thus depicted—"thought" this or that in an elevator, during a dinner or during an office conversation? Some of the best stories I've ever gotten were known to one person only, the person who told me. Woodstein must know it's crap. The fact that they persist in the fiction in this book is a sign of insecurity. It supports the perhaps patronizing but in my opinion fair judgment that they comprehended only the evil of Watergate and not the totality of the situations, relationships and motivations of many of the people who figure in the book.

Here are some examples of Woodstein reporting that I've checked with one or more of the people involved. Philip Buchen, President Ford's life-long friend and chief counsel, and Clay Whitehead, a Nixon official who worked with Buchen and others to prepare the transition from Nixon to Ford, appear as follows in an account of one of the pre-resignation meetings: "Whitehead walked Buchen out to his car to talk privately. What would happen if Nixon were impeached and convicted and then refused to leave office? Maybe the notion of the President resisting removal was not so absurd. Suppose he went crazy and tried to use the military to retain office. The two men wondered if perhaps they should raise the question with the Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger"—and so on. Buchen said to me the other day, in a gentle jibe at the many who were refusing to be quoted, "I'm not one of those who won't admit they talked to Woodward and Bernstein." He said that every reference to him in the book, including the one just quoted, is accurate.

William Watts, one of several Kissinger assistants who quit the National Security Council staff in 1970 at the time of the Cambodia invasion, figures with Kissinger and General Alexander Haig, then Kissinger's White House deputy, in a vivid description of Watts' departure: "Watts went to see Kissinger alone to state his objections. 'Your view represents the cowardice of the Eastern Establishment,' Kissinger told him. Furious, Watts got up out of his chair and moved toward Kissinger. He was going to punch him. Kissinger moved quickly behind his desk. He was not serious, he said." Watts then had a show-down talk with Haig. "'You've just had an order from your Commander in Chief,' Haig said. Watts could not resign. 'Fuck you, Al,' Watts said. 'I just did.'" I've been told that this passage, particularly the bit about Watts being about to punch Kissinger, exaggerates Watts' importance and belligerence. Watts says it's "pretty accurate."

The book lists among the qualities of Lawrence Eagleburger, one of Kissinger's close associates, "the ability to say, 'Henry, you're full of shit.'" Eagleburger has been heard to say that about Kissinger to others, but it is unimaginable that he's ever said it directly to Kissinger. In a reference to Eagleburger and to Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Kissinger's former deputy and his successor at the White House, Woodstein write that Kissinger's "frequent descriptions of Nixon as irrational, insecure and maniacal could at times just as easily apply to Kissinger as to the President, they believed." I state as fact known to me that Eagleburger and Scowcroft never believed this of either Nixon or Kissinger, except perhaps of Nixon in his time of final disintegration. Kissinger bad-mouths practically everybody he knows, Presidents included. But several of his NSC assistants—among them John F. Lehman, Jr., now deputy director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency—tell me they *never* heard Kissinger describe Nixon "as irrational, insecure and maniacal." Lehman, who was one of Kissinger's closest

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and best informed assistants in the Nixon years, says that Woodstein never approached him or tried to check anything with him. Ben Bradlee, the *Washington Post*'s executive editor, says he encountered Kissinger at a social affair after the book appeared and challenged him to deny anything in it. He attaches great importance to the fact that Kissinger didn't deny anything. The fact is meaningless. Apart from the little he's said publicly, Kissinger isn't talking about this book.

Very few of the central facts and assertions in the book are wholly new. I reported in this journal in 1974, for instance, the view of some of Nixon's assistants that the pressures upon him before he resigned had unbalanced him and the further view, less widely held, that he'd been fundamentally unstable for years before the end. Three episodes reported in the book, however, are new, interesting and real additions to our knowledge of the Nixon tragedy.

The most widely noted of these additions is the account of the hours Kissinger spent with Nixon the night before he announced his intention to resign: "Between sobs, Nixon was plaintive . . . How had it come to this? How had a simple burglary, a breaking and entering, done all this? Nixon . . . was hysterical. 'Henry,' he said, 'you are not a very orthodox Jew, and I am not an orthodox Quaker, but we need to pray.' Nixon got down on his knees. Kissinger felt he had no alternative but to kneel down, too . . . And then, still sobbing, Nixon leaned over and struck his fist on the carpet, crying, 'What have I done? What has happened?'" This was one of the many passages Kissinger had in mind when he complained in a public statement that the book lacks decency and compassion. But the odd thing about the prayer story is that it had to come, directly or indirectly, from Kissinger. I am told and believe that he never described this scene to the two assistants, Lawrence Eagleburger and Brent Scowcroft, whom he rejoined in his White House office after he left Nixon that night. Only two errors in the account have been cited to me, the line about Nixon beating the carpet and a report that Eagleburger listened on a telephone extension to Nixon begging Kissinger not to tell anybody that he'd broken down. I'm told Eagleburger hung up when he realized Nixon was calling.

Two other pieces of genuine news in the book are the intention, frustrated by Gen. Haig, of two Nixon lawyers, Leonard Garment and Fred Buzhardt, to recommend to the President that he resign in November, 1973, and Gen. Haig's attempt to hire Hugh Morrow, Nelson Rockefeller's long-time press spokesman, as Richard Nixon's chief spokesman in early 1974. Garment and Buzhardt told Woodstein the resignation story. Carl Bernstein learned by accident of the attempt to recruit Morrow soon after it occurred and saved it for this book. Haig believed in late 1973 that Nixon would weather the Watergate storm and therefore refused to pass the Garment-Buzhardt recommendation to Nixon. The Morrow account errs slightly in having Morrow flatly demand that Press Secretary Ziegler be fired and that Nixon come clean about his Watergate role. Morrow declined when Haig told him that neither of these things was going to happen, but he didn't make them absolute conditions. One gathers that he didn't want the White House job, anyhow.

The two most serious flaws in the book are in the accounts of Henry Kissinger's relationships with and attitudes toward Nixon and Haig. It is simply not true that Kissinger viewed Nixon with "loathing" from the beginning of their relationship and throughout it. "Loathing" is much too simple and strong a term for the attitude of Kissinger, a very complex man, toward Richard Nixon, who also was and is a very complex man. They did not entirely trust each other, they were somewhat jealous of each other, but they needed and served and basically respected each other. It also is not true, as the book asserts, that Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleburger considered one of their priority duties to be the concealment of Kissinger's "loathing" of Nixon. They didn't believe then and don't believe now that Kissinger "loathed" Richard Nixon. I was told recently and on excellent authority that I was close to the mark when I wrote in this journal's March 20 issue that Kissinger's attitude toward Nixon was and is "a mixture of pity, disgust with Nixon as a person, respect for much of his performance as President, and gratitude to him for raising Henry Kissinger to power and eminence . . . "

Much the same may be said of the Woodstein thesis that the relationship between Kissinger and Haig was essentially one of hostility and distrust. They were indeed rather wary of each other. Haig, like practically everyone else who worked for Kissinger in the Nixon years and who works for him now, found him to be a brutal and at times nearly unbearable taskmaster. But I never heard Haig, with whom I spent hours over the years in discussion of Kissinger, speak of him with anything other than tolerance, respect and occasional humor. And I have never heard Kissinger, with whom I have had a contact and a reporter's relationship that Woodstein never had, speak of Haig with anything other than profound appreciation and respect. To have them secretly warring with each other, holding out on each other, distrusting each other during the last months of the Nixon presidency and of Nixon's disintegration, as this book does, is to be incredibly mistaken and wrong. Kissinger and Haig spent hours upon hours, day after day and night after night struggling together to maintain at least the façade of a viable presidency until their ruined President at last departed. This was the tragedy that Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein sought to relate and, with prodigious effort and in prodigious detail, reduce to the level of a sordid barroom brawl.

John Osborne

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Number Two and Trying Harder

Second Best Defense

by Eliot Marshall

A retired movie actor and an ambitious senator are helping to bring back the cold war; the chill has already swept through Congress. As in the '50s, we are hearing that the country is in trouble because it spends less on defense than the Soviet Union does. The leaders of this revival—candidates Ronald Reagan and Scoop Jackson—are enemies politically but close kin in their preoccupation with what they call America's military weakness. Both attack the administration for being insufficiently hostile toward the Russians, and both say they would like to pump up the military budget to prove that Americans are willing to fight. Since his dismissal last fall, former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger has also spoken out in favor of a greatly expanded Pentagon budget, and against what he views as the decline of Western will.

This criticism is clearly aimed at Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and it has had its effect. Kissinger himself has not retreated under the assault. He still insists that the US must continue its policy of reducing threats and limiting weapons purchases jointly with the USSR. But Kissinger's boss, President Ford, is not so resolute. After a brief period of hesitation, Ford seems to have joined the militarists. Today he speaks in favor of policies he repudiated six months ago. In recent weeks the President not only dropped the word "détente" from his vocabulary, but also gave hints through his old friends Rogers Morton and Melvin Laird that he may drop Kissinger as well. He boasted that he had proposed the two largest defense budgets in peacetime history. Meanwhile the Pentagon has not missed its chance. It has promoted some of its most costly weapons in Congress this spring with startling success.

Last year Congress made an unprecedented six billion dollar cut in the defense budget. The justification was that the Vietnam war was over, and the President had ordered a policy of general austerity to reduce all federal costs. Congress believed that the Pentagon should suffer its share of cutbacks right along with HEW. This year all that has changed. As an antidote to its good sense of 1975, Congress now is preparing to reverse itself and outspend the President. The congressional budget system, which came into being last year and then helped restrain military spending, has had no impact this spring. Both the House and Senate budget committees gave their blessing to the massive increase in funds sought by President Ford. The current Pentagon budget is $101 billion. The tentative 1977 budget lurches to $113 billion, the single steepest rise since the US geared up for Vietnam in 1965-66. And the House Armed Services Committee went even further, adding new items that even President Ford didn't request.

Many explanations have been offered to account for this surge of military spending. Social programs seem bankrupt and discredited. Communist gains in Angola, Italy and Portugal make congressmen uneasy. There have been new, warlike skirmishes in the Middle East. And finally, the Pentagon, aided by election-year politics, has done a good job of selling itself. One of its most effective promotional devices in this campaign has been the defense "dollar gap." The figure that stirred the most concern was a Pentagon estimate that the Soviets now spend 40 percent more than the US spends on defense—roughly $114 billion in "real" dollars as against our $80 billion. If inflation and the cost of frills like military pensions are discounted, the real US investment in defense has been falling since 1964 (a total of 18 percent over the 12 elapsed years), while Russian defense spending has risen 2.7 percent each year.

While no one denies that Russia has been spending more than the US, there are wide differences in the way this trend is interpreted. The 40 percent dollar gap, first cited by the Pentagon and then picked up by Reagan for campaign speeches, clearly overstates the case. The gap was conceived by Pentagon lobbyists who decided to calculate the value of the Russian military machine in dollars, just as if it had been bought in the US. This method is biased against the US for several reasons. First, it fails to take account of the tremendous differences between the Russian and American economies. Since the ruble isn't traded on international markets, cost comparisons are based on guesswork and are necessarily subjective. Experts differ, for example, on how to treat the cost of manpower. Labor is cheap in the Soviet Union, particularly military labor. Russia's forces are now 4.8 million strong, more than twice as large as America's. But to calculate their value in terms of what it would cost the US to hire the same number of volunteers at American wages is to engage in Russia-puffery.

Dollar comparisons also cheat the US in that they fail to account for differences in quality. Who can say whether Russian draftees are as valuable as American

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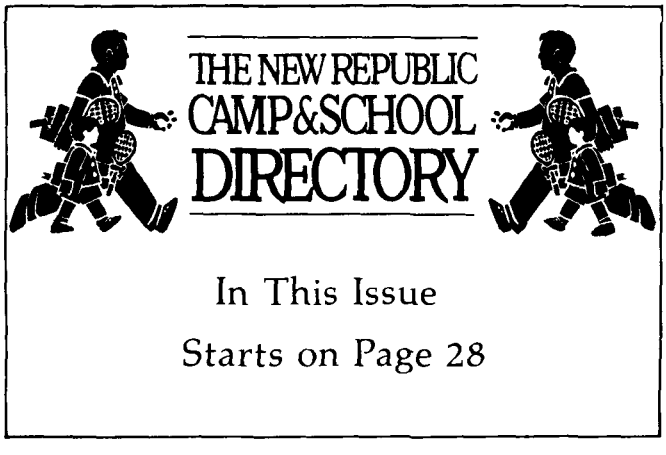
professionals? One Pentagon critic, Rep. Les Aspin (D,Wis.), believes that they aren't. He argues that the Russian military is padded with noncombat troops: 70,000 "political" officers, 250,000 construction troops, 150,000 railroad and farm troops, 430,000 internal security guards and hundreds of thousands of others that ought not to be counted. By Aspin's method of calculation, US and Russian combat manpower are roughly equal. Aspin also believes that if quality and not quantity is the criterion, much of Russia's equipment is second-rate. Finally Aspin points out that Russia is responding not so much to America's as to China's military spending, which has grown more rapidly in the last decade than any other major power's. It is tremendously costly to maintain troops along the Sino-Soviet border—a military necessity for the USSR that has no equivalent in the US.

Having said that, one should add a qualification. It would be just as reckless for the US to ignore the long-term trend of Russia's military expansion as to overreact with a sudden arms buildup. Russia's intervention in the Yom Kippur war in 1973 and recent Soviet meddling in Africa demonstrate that détente has not ended the need for gradual improvement in US defense forces. But there are ways to maintain American strength that do not give the admirals and generals carte blanche. The Pentagoners are too specialized in their training—and too devoted to new gadgetry—to be entrusted with making budget decisions. Congress and the President must learn to follow independent advice on weaponry. The B-1 bomber is an example of the kind of weapon the US doesn't need, but will buy simply because it is available and new. The B-1 replaces the old B-52 strategic bomber, and although it is a handsome plane, it should be classified a luxury among weapons. The US already has missiles, submarines and B-52s that do the job the B-1 is designed for, which is essentially to deliver H-bombs. This new vehicle, costing about one billion dollars for the first three models, does the job a bit better. But it is, in Pentagon terms, a redundant system and one we could safely do without.

In other areas, however, a reform of the military budget may require expansion. This is where a project like the B-1 really hurts, because it drains away funds that could be used on conventional weapons. For example, even Les Aspin agrees that the navy needs to be refurbished. The number of US ships in operation has dropped from a high of 900 in 1964 to just under 500 today, while the Soviet navy continues to grow in size and capability. A key issue that ought to be reexamined this year, but will probably be swept aside, is whether the navy should be completely nuclear powered. Since it's possible to buy three conventional ships for the price of two nuclear ones, this decision has tactical as well as fiscal importance. Many defense planners who would like to expand the navy (including former chief of naval operations Admiral Elmo Zumwalt) think it would make sense to have new ships powered by conventional fuel, making it possible to buy more material for the money. Yet Congress voted last year to require all "major combatant vessels" in the future to be nuclear powered.

Another project that ranks relatively low on the list of priorities is the refurbishing of America's NATO forces. The US equipment stored in and designed for Europe is helpful in discouraging Soviet adventurism in the Middle East as well as in the European buffer states such as Yugoslavia, where a crisis could develop after Tito's death. Defense analyst Barry Blechman, a Fellow at the Brookings Institution, wrote recently, "Continued erosion of the military balance in Europe could, over the long term, aggravate already existing centrifugal forces within the NATO alliance. At worst, it could cause the larger states of Europe—including Germany—to attempt to go-it-alone, with unpredictable implications for Soviet behavior." He recommends a "prudent" expansion of these conventional ground forces. Blechman would increase the production of armored carriers and antitank weapons; he would also refine US air and sealift capabilities for use in Europe. This isn't an exciting program by Pentagon standards—and certainly not as grand as building a B-1 bomber or Trident super submarine—but it's the kind that ought to be given more thought.

The one area where there is still hope of cutting Pentagon costs this year is in manpower "extras": pay raises, housing allowances, commissary subsidies and other nonessentials. President Ford offered a package of reforms that would save $3.8 billion this year by trimming back personnel costs and selling off old military stockpiles. Rep. Aspin would go further than Ford, for example, by bringing the military retirement plans into line with civilian versions. (Pension checks wouldn't be sent out until the retiree reaches age 55.) However, Congress is usually generous when it comes to pensions and pay raises, and it will be reluctant to pass a cutback this year when so much money is being lavished on the weapons makers. At Aspin's request, the Pentagon calculated what it will cost if the President's cutbacks are *not* adopted. The price, after



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five years, will be $32 billion.

The domestic debate over the 1977 defense budget gives more cause for worry than all the gaps and number charts cranked out by the Pentagon. It exposes the American system of military planning for the clumsy tool it has become—a lurching, halting machine that in election years nearly falls apart. All subtlety is lost when the discussion turns, as it does today, on whether the US is number two in the world. A person must either be "for" or "against" the military in this atmosphere. There are dangers in indulging the Pentagon this way. One is that the difficult choices—such as between nuclear and conventional ships—will be deferred indefinitely and never made. Thus the Pentagon may get a little of everything it wants, but not the critical supervision it must have if it is to sort out the useful from the fanciful among its weapons projects. And another is that the US could, without intending to, trigger a revived weapons race with Russia. Should either of these possibilities come true, at least we will know whom to thank: Ronald Reagan for raising the scare, and Jerry Ford for responding to it.

Protecting the Shoe and Steel People

Trade War Ahead?

by Robert Samuelson

International trade doesn't excite most Americans, and why should it? This country exports less than eight percent of its total output, and imports just about the same amount. Although the figure has nearly doubled in the last decade, it is still relatively small. Things abroad are different. Trade typically represents between 20 and 50 percent of a nation's output, and the world's largest single export market is the United States, which absorbs nearly one-seventh of all imports. So when the US begins making protectionist noises, Americans may not notice, but our trading partners do. They begin howling loudly—which is what they are doing now.

A relatively obscure government agency, the US International Trade Commission, touched off the screaming by recommending import restrictions on shoes and specialty steel. For consumers and businessmen, that would almost certainly mean higher prices. Together, the two cases affect more than $1.2 billion worth of trade, or about one percent of all US imports. The rulings are regarded abroad as an ominous harbinger of greater American protectionism. Right or wrong (and US officials vehemently insist it is wrong), this perception itself is dangerous. Given America's preeminent position, its actions can influence other nations' attitudes toward trade restrictions. And the last thing the world economy's incipient recovery needs now is new depressants in the form of additional trade barriers.

Recall that the international economic climate has changed fundamentally since the late '60s and early '70s. During this period, world trade enjoyed an enormous expansion, growing nearly 150 percent between 1971 and 1974 (though much of the gain reflected higher oil and commodity prices). Against this fundamental vitality, protectionist measures in any one country could be seen as isolated aberrations. Now the torrid expansion has ceased. The worldwide recession caused trade (in real terms) to contract last year. Burdened with heavy oil bills and high unemployment, an increasing number of major trading countries—Great Britain, Italy and Brazil are three good examples—face rising pressures to impose stringent import controls as stopgap solutions to balance-of-payments problems and to joblessness.

Two years ago, in the wake of the oil price increases, those pressures were rejected. Realizing that fuel costs would result in widespread trade deficits, the world's major industrial nations pledged not to engage in futile attempts to reach surplus. There was a virtually universal recognition that a chain reaction of import restrictions would be self-defeating. Trade would suffocate, and everyone would suffer. The same logic remains valid today, but the abstract pressures of 1974 have become more tangible—and less easily resisted. Protectionist moves by strong trading nations (last year, the US managed an $11 billion trade surplus) cannot reinforce other nations' self-restraint.

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So the ITC's actions could not have come at a worse time. This is sheer coincidence—bad luck. The agency's recent burst of activity stems from changes legislated in the 1974 Trade Act, which effectively ordered the agency (formerly known as the Tariff Commission) to be more solicitous of US industry and labor union complaints of import injury. At the time, the American trade outlook was not so rosy, and the administration desperately needed legislative authority to participate in new multilateral trade talks. Concessions to protectionism were part of the price for passage. Among other things, the Trade Act loosened the so-called "escape clause," requiring the ITC to rule on escape clause complaints no longer than six months after filing. Because most of the initial complaints were filed late last summer and early last fall, the agency is now disgorging its decisions.

The escape clause originated in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a multilateral treaty negotiated in 1947 to regulate international trade. The escape clause was intended to balance the theoretical good of freer trade against the practical social and political problems caused by imports. By invoking the escape clause for an industry that faced serious "injury," a country could withdraw trade concessions. To prevent this power from being used promiscuously, however, the GATT also provided compensation to nations whose exports were affected: that is, new trade concessions offsetting the losses. If the exporting country wasn't satisfied, it could retaliate by withdrawing some of its own concessions.

In the US, the escape clause wasn't of much use. Before the 1974 changes, an industry had to prove three things before qualifying for protection: first, that it was indeed suffering "serious injury"; second, that the "major" cause of the injury was imports; and third, that the import damage resulted primarily from a recent liberalization of trade arrangements (such as a tariff reduction). That was a tough standard. Industries with import problems didn't like it, and their lobbying succeeded in lightening the burden of proof considerably. Now, after demonstrating injury, all an industry has to show is that imports are an "important" cause "not less than any other cause"—a vague phrase that allows considerable leeway. The import influx doesn't have to be tied to a recent trade liberalization.

Of the two recent decisions—specialty steel and shoes—the steel case is the smaller, involving about $200 million worth of imports (in 1974 figures) against about one billion dollars for shoes. Nevertheless, it has raised a tiny furor. That reaction probably reflects the shakiness of the decision. In 1975, production of specialty steel—stainless steel and tool-alloy steel—slumped 40 percent, but the primary cause of the decline was the recession, not imports.

Specialty steel accounts for only one percent of steel shipments, but it is used intensively in industrial machinery, including chemical and anti-pollution equipment, that has been hit hard by the slump in capital investment. Thus, business cycle fluctuations tend to affect specialty steel more than most steel; last year, all steel production declined only 25 percent. True, specialty imports did increase their share of the US domestic sales from 11 percent in 1974 to 18.5 percent, but the actual amount of imports rose only slightly. The higher penetration resulted from overseas producers' greater willingness to cut prices in the face of slack demand. Between 1970 and 1974, imports' share of the US market had actually declined. To foreigners (and many Americans), that record is simply too weak to justify escape-clause protection.

The damage to the shoe industry is far more severe, but it is questionable whether import relief—in the form of quotas or tariffs—will actually provide much permanent help to shoe firms and to workers who are genuinely suffering. Part of the growth in imports (which now represent 40 percent of US sales, up from about 15 percent in 1963) stems from fashion innovation, but the major source of gain has been cheap labor. The Trade Act permits only temporary relief for three to five years, and such interim protection will not eliminate the basic problem. Shoe production is a natural for developing nations; the capital costs of equipment are low, and supplies of inexpensive manpower are abundant. Little wonder, then, that Italy—traditionally the largest shoe exporter to the US—is now being seriously pressed by Taiwan, Spain and Brazil.

Rather than helping weak firms, import protection is likely to provide unnecessary shelter for the strong. Contrary to popular impression, the US shoe industry is not in a state of universal retrenchment. Many firms are relatively robust. In its report, the ITC printed (without much comment) a table highlighting the contrasts. Between 1960 and 1974, employment in the industry's traditional stronghold—the New England states, plus a few others, such as New York, Pennsylvania, and Missouri—dropped about 45 percent, from 188,000 to 105,000. In the same time period, however, employment in other states jumped about one third, from 54,000 to 72,000. This indicates that companies locate their newer, more efficient plants outside the industry's bastion. Low wages abroad do not guarantee imports an ever-growing share of the US market. Not only are there transportation and insurance costs, but, as the ITC report indicated, other factors weigh against imports: long lead times in ordering, quality controls, the unfamiliarity of suppliers and import credit requirements.

The precise relief for these two industries remains to be settled. The President has ordered his special trade representative, former Commerce Secretary Frederick Dent, to negotiate specialty steel quotas close to those urged by the ITC. That would represent about a five percent cutback in actual 1975 imports. In 1977,

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imports could grow by the same percentage as the US market expanded in 1976. Thus, US producers receive a guaranteed market share, with the one-year time lag working in their favor. If voluntary negotiations—a more discreet and flexible approach—fail, the President will order the unilateral imposition of quotas. A breakdown of negotiations would also probably mean that other nations would demand compensating trade concessions.

On shoes, a few agencies—reportedly, the Treasury and State Departments—have argued that the sharp split between strong and weak firms justifies nothing more than additional adjustment assistance for ailing companies and communities. However, it is more likely that the President will adopt some sort of tariff-rate quota arrangement: that is, after a quota is reached (say the 1974 level of imports), steep tariffs would be slapped on additional imports. The shoe manufacturers want an additional tariff of about 50 percent (against about 10 percent now). Shoe retailers frantically oppose any restrictions, but have suggested a lower, sliding tariff-quota compromise (the rate would be 20, 25 and 30 percent, to be imposed as imports rise). Obviously, in either case the consumer would be paying higher prices.

The White House, however, cannot cavalierly discard protection without running a substantial risk. Shoes are specifically mentioned in the Trade Act, and both the industry and its congressional allies believe they received White House assurances in 1974 of sympathetic treatment in return for support of the legislation. Outright rejection of import restrictions would be regarded as a breach of faith. Normally, the Trade Act would permit Congress to override the President's decision and substitute the recommendation of the ITC. However, a technicality (*i.e.* the ITC members split on the precise form of desirable relief for shoes) has confused Congress' legal power. But, if barred here, shoe state congressmen might introduce separate protective legislation; even if the legislation didn't pass, the congressional fireworks could be embarrassing to the White House. In an election year, with unemployment well above 7 percent, the issue would be crystallized as American versus foreign jobs. Affected workers would be antagonized, and there are probably not many "consumer" votes to be won on an issue so narrow and obscure. Had the President rejected action on steel, he certainly would have faced a similar override challenge from steel unions, companies, and their congressional supporters.

Technical as all this seems, it gives the unfortunate impression that any US industry with import problems can scamper for protection under the 1974 Act. That is not true. But, if most of the complaints filed to date have been rejected, the major ones have not. A few other large items cloud the horizon. The Treasury is now investigating allegations that foreign automakers have been "dumping" cars in the US; that means that the cars have been sold at prices below those in their home countries, though dumping doesn't necessarily mean subsidized or below-cost sales. If the Treasury makes a dumping finding (which is a good possibility), the case would go the the ITC, which would have to find "injury" (more uncertain) before extra duties would be imposed on cars. Likewise, the US Steel Corp. has claimed that the Common Market's steel imports are unfairly subsidized by the value-added tax; the Treasury has rejected that complaint, but US Steel has threatened to take the case to court. The threat looks like a pressure tactic to prod the administration into negotiating worldwide agreement to limit all steel imports. There is little evidence that such protection is needed. Last year, despite the recession, steel imports didn't flood into the US. Specialty steel was an exception, and, on most products, foreign producers apparently don't enjoy a significant price advantage.

American trade officials complain that US protective actions are judged far more harshly—and unfairly so—than much more consequential measures by other countries. There is some truth to this. Other countries are hardly innocent. Recently, for example, the Common Market decided to dispose of some of its huge surplus of dried milk by compelling European animal feeders to mix the milk with normal feed. American officials believe this step could cost $200 to $400 million in US soybean exports, and, therefore, they have protested. The Common Market and Japan reached a covert agreement to limit Japanese steel imports to Europe. And Brazil recently imposed a series of import restrictions.

But, fair or not, the fact is that America's actions do help set the climate for trade. And it is also true, as the recent sharp declines in both the British pound and Italian lira demonstrate, that pressures to control imports are intensifying. In Britain, a respectable case is now being made to impose strict controls. The argument goes like this: without a further massive devaluation of the pound, the UK will systematically spend more abroad at "full employment" than it earns; thus, full employment is impossible without massive devaluation; but massive devaluation is impossible because it will cause a large drop in living standards (all import costs would rise) that will spur another round of hefty wage increases; the only solution is temporary import restrictions that allow Britain to rebuild its economy and reduce unemployment. This is fine—unless other countries protect themselves with similar actions.

It is easy to overdramatize all this. "Trade wars" come and go, mostly in the press. US officials are inclined to think that when all the shouting is over, this "war" will turn out to be but another skirmish that is settled, more or less, satisfactorily. Probably. But the effects of small events accumulate. Things drift, and, in trade, they are now drifting in the wrong direction.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Mysteries

All the President's Men (Warner Bros.). The first things we see are letters being struck by a typewriter—huge, à la *Citizen Kane*. The last thing we see is a wire-service machine typing out the leads of the last stories in the Watergate case, ending with Nixon's resignation. This opening-and-close by typing is quite right: because the star of this film is the typewriter. It clatters all through. The two leading reporters keep rushing to their typewriters because the film's real action is the stories that they write. The typewriter's co-star is the telephone. A lot of the important dialogue takes place on the phone with the other voice magnified through a filter.

The typewriters and telephones are very ably supported by Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman as Woodward and Bernstein. When the reporters' book about their Watergate investigation was bought for films, a lot of people said it couldn't be made into a film. Well, it couldn't. But on the way to an ultimately static and uncomfortable result, there's some passable acting, by Redford and Hoffman and others, and there's some pleasure in seeing again the defeat of—no calmer term will do—an attempted fascist coup.

The trouble with the film is that it's inevitably off-center: the interest in the Woodward-Bernstein story is mostly in what they uncovered, not in the act of uncovering it. What we get on the screen a good deal of the time is, in film terms, trite: the two young reporters, jealous of one another, joining forces, pounding at their bosses for a chance to pursue their hunches; the tough but good-hearted editors who finally agree to give the youngsters the go-ahead ("Ben, those kids are *hungry*! Didn't you ever know what it was to be hungry?")—it all substantiates for the zillionth time what Wilde said about life imitating art. The script, which is factual—though of course condensed and rearranged from the book, by William Goldman—might have been written by Ben Hecht. Except of course that Hecht would never have dared to invent the plot.

Two aspects of the *Washington Post* investigation become particularly vivid: 1) how *un*vivid an investigative reporter's life is most of the time—full of pavement-pounding slog, like a detective's life; 2) the great good luck that Woodward, who had been on the paper only nine months, just happened to know the man dubbed Deep Throat—the still unidentified source who, miraculously, knew most things about most aspects of the story and could at least affirm or deny what Woodward brought him. Will we ever learn who Deep Throat was/is?

The director, Alan J. Pakula (*Klute, The Parallax View*), had to try to make a visually repetitious picture visually interesting. Part of the time he succeeds; part of the time you see him trying, as when he paints on some suspicion of physical danger where none is forthcoming or when he makes you conscious of his attempts to vary things—with, for instance, long overhead shots. His average is pretty good, however, and once in a while he's sharp, as in the next-to-last sequence: in the foreground is a TV set in the newsroom with Nixon speaking with victorious paternal gloat and in the background are Woodward and Bernstein typing away. I'm sure that Pakula and the producer, Walter Coblenz, worked with the editor, Robert L. Wolfe; still Wolfe himself shows exceptional skill in the shaving of scenes and shots as finely as possible.

Aside from the pleasure of re-seeing some of the Fall, the film is a reminder of three important points. First, the lack of national response to the Watergate break-in. I remember talking with a friend of mine, a national TV correspondent, in September 1972 and asking him why people weren't storming through the streets at the outrage, why it had almost been forgotten at that time. "Because," he said, "if they followed the thing through logically, then they would have to vote for McGovern, and they don't want to do that."

This ties to the second point, a large subject that perhaps a social psychologist will tackle some day: the American public's great Need Not to Know about Nixon. Just think of the things that have been public about him since very near the beginning of his political career: his slanderings and distortions about Jerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas in California, the revolting Checkers speech in the 1952 presidential campaign, his neurotic outburst after his California defeat in 1962—these are only the best-known items. Yet they didn't prevent him from rising to the presidency, because the public chose to ignore them.

And then there is a matter relating to Nixon's psyche: the existence of the White House tapes. Even the Ervin committee didn't know about them until their hearings were well under way. Why hadn't Nixon destroyed them long before that? He could have concocted an excuse if their prior existence became known, and in any case it would have been a *fait accompli*. Without those tapes he might be in the White House still. My own speculation is that in this regard he resembles (yes) Oscar Wilde. The history of Wilde's trials shows his insistence on pushing forward even though he knew he was guilty, from which one may infer that underneath the elaborate defense, he felt some profound need to be found out and punished. Without those White House tapes Nixon could personally not have been caught. The fact that he insisted on preserving the only real evidence of his guilt shows some parallel with Wilde: under the obligatory gestures of innocence was some wish to be found out.

At least this film, uncomfortable though it residually is as film, renews wonder on these matters: and gives us the chance to enjoy once again some of

Films Worth Seeing

Face to Face. Ingmar Bergman, Liv Ullmann and friends explore the "normality" of the normal. Not best Bergman but often fine.

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Jack Nicholson is tremendous in a questionable mental-hospital allegory.

Seven Beauties. Lina Wertmüller's tragic farce of a Neapolitan in WW II. Sometimes trite or blatant, yet a daring, beautiful concept.

Vincent, François, Paul and the Others. Male bonding with Yves Montand and pals, their wives and women. No pinnacle, just maturely pleasant.

SK

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the healthiest *Schadenfreude* in 20th-century US history.

Family Plot (Universal). One could endure, possibly even enjoy, a new Hitchcock picture, even such a laborious piece of crinkum-crankum as this latest, if one didn't sit through it noting the places for eventual heavy critical exegesis. An overhead shot of pursuer and pursued coming together on the mazed paths of a cemetery; a gravedigger's head seemingly popping out of the earth to startle us; a clergyman using a bunch of Sunday School kids as a cover for a rendezvous with a woman, these are only some of the occasions that will inevitably serve to demonstrate Hitchcock's style-as-meaning, his cynical moral surgery. No OK name is too OK for the Hitchcock exegetes—James, Keats, Shakespeare—as they busy themselves in proving that their master is denied Olympian status only by those who cannot see film as film.

Well, I am one who insists that film means more than film-making, about which Hitchcock's skills have left no doubts for decades. Sheerly in terms of deftness he seems to have got a second wind in his middle 70s: this picture and *Frenzy* were better made than the ones just before them like *Topaz* and *Marnie*. I must admire his stamina. I have less admiration for this script, by Ernest Lehman, which starts slowly, knits two disparate stories together with wearing predictability, and is steeped in the incredible. And as I've noted before, for all the encomia about his style, a Hitchcock film, allowing for some ebb and flow of directorial cleverness at various stages of his career, stands or stumbles by virtue of the script. (Why is *The Lady Vanishes* more memorable than *Stage Fright*? Because it's *directed* better?)

This new Hitchcock, which has to do with a missing-heir plot and a kidnap plot that finally mesh, has a nice performance by Barbara Harris as a seedy California clairvoyant; an utterly incomprehensible character played by Bruce Dern (Who *is* he? Where did he get the detective experience he shows?); a lot of silliness (including a secret room right out of old serials); and some cleverness. The rest I leave to the acolytes.

Philip Pearlstein: Dis-Armorying Art History

In 1962, when the art establishment was hailing objecthood, reductivism and abstraction as the destiny of art, Philip Pearlstein began painting nudes. Rejecting the "processed" realism of the pop artist, with its reliance on photography and popular culture, Pearlstein chose instead a more traditional realism based on direct visual perception. The consequences of such a move did not seem promising. By working outside the formal vocabulary of his time, Pearlstein was moving himself out of the mainstream of contemporary art history. Today, however, the river flows right to his door, for Pearlstein's work, so powerful, so old and so new, has helped to generate a resurgence of realism in our time.

Why, when other realist painters suffered critical neglect, was Pearlstein's work given serious consideration? Part of the answer lies in the context of Pearlstein's development as an artist. By 1962, when he first exhibited his realist nudes, Pearlstein had already paid his dues to modernism. When he first arrived in New York, he shared a studio with Carnegie Tech classmate Andy Warhol. As a graduate student at NYU, he wrote his thesis on the mechanistic imagery of the Dadaist Francis Picabia. By 1954, Pearlstein's abstract-expressionist-inspired landscapes had been acknowledged by the high priest of formalism Clement Greenberg, who chose Pearlstein's paintings for an "emerging talent" show at Kootz Gallery. When his transition to realism was complete, Pearlstein had established his credentials as a "serious" artist.

If his background was in a sense impeccable, there was still the problem of Pearlstein's paintings. Their content, craftsmanship and reverence for direct perception seemed out of tune with

Nathan Glazer exposes the negative impact of "affirmative action"

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Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy

Nathan Glazer

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their time. In an effort to place the work within the existing historical framework, some critics seized upon the paintings' cool, detached tone, introspective models painted with precise objectivity. This tone, it was felt, related the work to the dominant spirit of art in the '60s. Pearlstein himself has acknowledged this: "I do think I helped set that tone. In 1962 or '63, I was teaching at Yale and wrote a couple of articles in which I talked about the expressionist attitude: as an expressionist, you couldn't have control over the content. In fact, one of the articles was called "Who does the painting belong to?" Does it belong to the person who interprets it or to the artist? I talked about being as objective as possible, and controlling the aspects of the painting you could control, and rejecting all emotional, expressionistic overtones."

No matter how "cool" his tone, however, Pearlstein is not a pop artist or a photo-realist. He does not copy photographs, nor does he work from a pre-determined format. For Pearlstein, the artist's eyes must remain open to the world throughout the act of painting. This commitment changed the nature of his work. "I decided very early that I had to work with models . . . because the photograph simply does not give the information point by point that you need . . . When you work from photographs, you do not get involved in multiple views of form which have to be a three-dimensional experience. The whole experience of painting becomes much more intense when you work from the live model."

The kind of information which Pearlstein seeks and the way he presents it has resulted in paintings that challenge the formalist domination of art today. Pearlstein's latest selection of studio work (recently on view at the Allan Frumpkin Gallery in New York and the Fendrick Gallery in Washington) looks like the strongest painting anyone has produced in years. Their compositions play the irregular forms of the models' bodies against the more ordered and precise shapes of furniture or rugs and the curvilinear outlines of shadows. In this way, Pearlstein creates a spectrum of contours, from hard to soft. While the work is very large in scale, exacting in detail, and visually complex, nothing looks labored. There is an ease to the painting, a rectitude to the technique and the composition that bespeaks Pearlstein's mastery of his material. Pearlstein's palette has lightened as well, and his brushwork has become more refined. To these changes, he has added a new range of color relationships that protect the work from a ponderousness which marred some of his earlier pieces. His work has gained in elegance without sacrificing its monumentality. It is good, possibly great painting.

Considering the power of the work, it is fascinating to observe the critical confusion that still centers around Pearlstein's painting and contemporary realism in general. The writing related to the present exhibitions is exemplary. Though there is general agreement about the quality of Pearlstein's painting, there is almost universal perplexity about the source of that quality. It seems that the vocabulary to evaluate realist painting has atrophied.

Like all major works of art, Pearlstein's painting, along with some of the other contemporary realists, has precipitated a serious problem in critical language and historical perspective. Contemporary realism cannot anchor itself onto any existing historical sequence. Pop art and photo-realism are only distant cousins. If present historians are right, Pearlstein, Alex Katz, Al Leslie, Rackstraw Downes, and their colleagues in perceptual realism sprang forth from nowhere, an immaculate conception. Thus far, the history of 20th century art has been seen as a steady progression of renunciations. History has been a rigid taskmaster to the artists of our time, setting limitations, demanding exorbitant sacrifices. Through cubism, futurism, surrealism, abstract expressionism and on into post-painterly abstraction, only the decade of social realism and a few stray realists seem to have stood their ground in the continuing onslaught against painting. Some, like Edward Hopper, managed to find both a popular audience and critical acclaim. Most found themselves in that limbo between tradition and the avant-garde, where few contemporary critics fear to tread. Then in the '60s, the cry that painting was dead seemed to settle the issue. Video, conceptual art, earthworks were the inevitable result of historical determinism.

The enforcement of a formalist historical sequence has become a cause célèbre for some artists, critics and curators. Their efforts have created an academy in the name of the avant-garde. In this regard, Pearlstein tells a chillingly apt story. "I was recently on the Awards Committee for the National Endowment for the Arts. There were six of us on the jury, and the other two artists were both conceptual. Together with a youngish curator they formed a block. . . . It took me two days to figure out what was going on esthetically. This

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2 Female Models—On Hammock & Seated on Floor *Philip Pearlstein*

block was oriented toward a kind of work in which the idea dominates, and the actual physical work tends to be scattered, not self-contained with a central focus. . . . Also anything that was an overall field was in. But if the field just looked like an Olitski or a Brice Marden, it was labeled a copy. However, if it was cut up in some way, or had a separate unit it was OK. Any self-contained sculpture was also out, but things that were scattered, preferably through the landscape, were in. In other words, nothing with a single center of gravity was any longer new . . . . In the end, I had to put a special plea in for people working in other ways. By the time we got through, it looked fairly balanced, but it was a tough fight."

Pearlstein's story confirms the worst fears about the direction in which the present historical viewpoint is taking art. If one talks with artists who have worked in the last few decades, however, their viewpoint on history sounds very different. Freed from the need to fashion time into neat categorizations, they see the full range of contemporary creativity. The realists have been working all along, they say, but because the Armory Show of 1913 gave the avant-garde in America a head start, realism had to go underground. Pearlstein says that periodically realist painters would call for a "dis-Armory" Show, a chance to show realism in its full force and range, to redeem its reputation for this century. They may indeed have their wish come true. This month an exhibition of works by 45 realist painters opens at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington. Over the next two years the exhibition, sponsored by the Department of the Interior, will travel throughout the United States and to Europe. The prospects for the show are intriguing. For the first time in years—maybe for the first time in this century—an international audience will have the chance to see a significant body of contemporary realist painting. The exhibition is an excellent opportunity to proclaim the vitality of realism today, presenting it as a strong, innovating impulse in today's art. Pearlstein's paintings have helped to win for realism this right to renewed serious consideration, something that realism has not enjoyed for more than 30 years.

Mary Ann Tighe

Mary Ann Tighe is producer/writer of the "Art America" television series.

Books Considered

World of Our Fathers by Irving Howe

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $14.95)

World of Our Fathers is a remarkable book. One approaches big books with suspicion, and particularly big books by intellectuals, who—in America at least—have a short breath, and are at their best in book reviews and essays, crammed with brilliant insights which do not have to be developed at length—the *Partisan Review* style. And after all, Irving Howe, with all his accomplishment as literary critic and Socialist editor and writer, is neither a historian nor a sociologist, and he attempts here to encompass the whole experience of the East European Jewish immigration to the United States.

But Howe succeeds, better than the sociologists and the historians have. He is not engaged in simply retelling us what they have already told us in different languages: his own sharp and deep insight into the life and problems of East European Jews in America is everywhere evident, illuminating some aspect of their experience better than the specialists have—better than they have, at least, in English, and one suspects better than they have in Yiddish. The life of the common Jews and the culture they made is presented with particular sympathy and understanding. This culture is neither glamorized nor patronized. The Jews are not turned into paragons of piety, or revolutionary fervor, or learning, or wise parenthood. There are particular achievements in this long book. Thus, I have never seen a better or more perceptive account of the first generation of young people growing up on the Lower East Side, or of the world of the *Landsmanshaft* (the societies of immigrants from the same little towns). Any history of East European immigration speaks of them. We know they had self-help and socializing functions. Howe also points out that they were places where the ordinary Jew, whether the non-political or non-movement Jew or the Jew who had laid aside for the moment involvement in the conflict of ideologies, could meet, in something like

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an extended family setting. And indeed, one recalls that in the *Landsmanshaft* Socialist, anarchist, Communist and ordinary religious Jews could meet, socialize and work together. This insight undoubtedly derives from Howe's own experience—through parents and uncles—of the *Landsmanshaft*, added to the sources, which he has mastered, it would appear, with Herculean energy.

The familiar story of the emigration and the arrival on the East Side, the creation of a community, the rise of the different ideologies and movements that fought over the Jewish question, the economic adjustment, the rise of the trade unions, the split in the Socialist movement and the struggles that followed in Jewish life, the movement out of the East Side, is told again, but enriched and deepened with fresh details, drawn from the Yiddish press—which Howe seems to have read whole—or from immigrant biographies, published and unpublished, or from records of social life that have not seen print before, or from the personal experience of the writer.

But the real triumph of the book is the characterization of Yiddish culture—the poetry, newspapers, novels, theater, journals, polemics, scholarship that were produced in abundance in Yiddish. We are given a sympathetic but one feels just account and characterization of the varieties of Yiddish cultural expression, and here one sees at work the discipline that comes with a long immersion in sophisticated literary criticism. Whatever one's desire to speak well of the past, Howe points out, Yiddish culture was not a world culture; it couldn't be, based as it was on the lives of poor Jews from Eastern Europe who were just learning about—and leaping avidly upon—Western culture; but neither was it simply the expression of unlearned immigrants, because, as Howe argues, the Jews were particularly ready, despite their long encapsulation in the religious culture of the *shtetl*, to embrace all the treasures of Western culture, particularly in its secular, enlightenment forms. Yet they approached it from a remarkably distinctive perspective: the Talmudic mind analyzing Voltaire, as well as Marx. The meeting was unique—there has never been anything like it, and one doubts there can be anything like it again.

Nothing even in Jewish life before was ever like it. The outcome of the meeting was a peculiar mixture of idealism—drawn from religious and secular sources—and practical concern for one's self, one's family, one's people. On the whole, idealism has not been found among masses, rural or urban. On the Lower East Side it was. But these were still, after all, poor people trying to raise themselves. As Howe puts it:

"It was the unspoken hope of the immigrants that their visions and ambitions, the collective dream of Jewish fulfillment and the personal wish to improve the lot of their sons and daughters, could be satisfied at the same time. They hoped, through earnestness and toil, to link spiritual fulfillment with material gratification . . . " And again: "Between the careers of Al Jolson, singing 'Mammy' in blackface, and Morris Raphael Dohen, lecturing on Spinoza, parallels can be drawn which neither might care to notice but which time has made clear: drives toward perfection of work and acknowledgement in the world."

Howe has done more than retell the story; he justifies in this book the marriage of historical and sociological materials with that high seriousness, that grasping for brilliance, that is the special mark of the New York Jewish intellectual tradition.

Nathan Glazer

Nathan Glazer is professor of education and sociology at Harvard.

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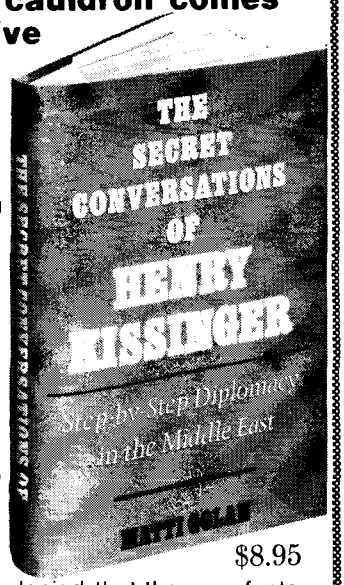

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An Alternate Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club

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1876: A Novel by Gore Vidal

(Random House; $10)

It has been called The Gilded Age and The Brown Decades, The Age of Energy and The Tragic Era, The Dreadful Decade, The Pragmatic Acquiescence. Gore Vidal just chose a symbolic number for the period when the morality of political life in this country reached its nadir, and corruption an all-time high; halfway between the Revolution and our own retreat from it, the year was 1876. But like a son struggling under the shadow of a famous father, *1876* resembles but hardly lives up to the variegated brilliance of *Burr*, a book that sparkled with the complexities of a far simpler age. In *1876*, on the other hand,

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Vidal has reduced a complex era to one-dimensional, albeit elaborate, flatness.

Vidal strings events along in a frieze constructed out of a sense of paradox, an inkling of terrible ironies which soon grows into the certainty of sustained cynicism. One of the central paradoxes, as it occurs to Charles Schemerhorn Schuyler, formerly young and inquisitive protagonist of *Burr*, now an inquiring 62-year-old expatriate returning from 40 years in Europe, is how old his young country has become. Aged and weathered by sin, a vestigial "puritan" guilt gnawing at its conscience, the virgin land is virgin no longer and has succumbed to universal depravity. This was a time when America seemed to have lost its innocence; disillusionment was, really for the first time, the prevailing mood. The country had sacrificed its optimism, tragically and through violence, in the Civil War, a presence which haunts Vidal's book.

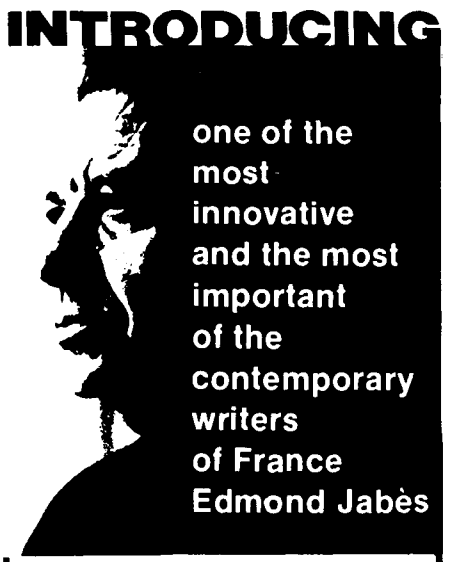
Attempting to re-enter American society and marry off his beautiful widowed daughter, Princess Emma d'Agrigente, to the highest bidder, Schuyler scoffs at the proliferation of military titles men have salvaged from the muck of battle, but it is no coincidence that he seems to encounter only veterans of the Civil War or those who bought their way out of it; there are cowards and heroes, robber barons grown rich off the spoils and street-beggars who lost all they had in the fighting, including their arms or legs, and their dignity. American biography at the time mainly cranked out military memoirs, portraiture produced endless rows of soldierly subjects. But serious writers were somehow not able to handle the thing, and the following decade was, as a whole, belligerently anti-intellectual, a reaction from tensions captured, according to a contemporary diagnostician in *Harper's Weekly*,

> *in a certain public frenzy. Enormous speculations, losses, and consequent frauds; an increase of crime, a curious and tragical recklessness in the management of railroads and steamers; a fury of extravagance in public watering places are all observable.*

Vidal's Schuyler does, however, think that he can confront Reconstruction America through his writing. Masquerading as a political commentary, *1876* is as much about writing as it is about historical events, as much a consideration of political rhetoric as an analysis of statesmanship. Language is important to the journalist and author Charles Schuyler has become: his own way of expressing himself as well as the new ways in which his native country is revealed through slang and false slogans. Like *Burr*, *1876* is written in the form of a diary; Vidal's favorite tactic is to fictionalize history, to have a character record history while living it. He has always been fascinated by how a man's thoughts are translated to his private journal, how experience is embalmed for posterity. In *1876*, it is not time which is money, but literature itself. The nation seems hell-bent on making a fortune, everything "has a price," government is "the giving and taking of money," and Schuyler, too, has to hawk his talents and sometimes prostitute them to stay afloat. He is forced to think in terms of articles, of catchy sentences and neat metaphors, to see with an eye for publication.

Vidal always keeps Schuyler at one remove, though; it is the distance of a disaffected expatriate reinforced by the skepticism of a cynic. Schuyler is limited to functioning as an observer rather than as a participant. This remoteness hurts Vidal's story in many ways, jeopardizing even his narrator's repeated (and repetitive) professions of interest in the political scene. He declares again and again, as it were, but never acts, just as he tends to get bogged down in a monotonous series of verbal tricks which turn into an irritating tic. Boss Tweed's downfall, the venal Grant administration, the Tilden-Hayes election are presented in great detail, but it is often the specificity of a text dealing with historical trivia at the expense of relevance. Vidal is at his best when he fits social portraits into the scandal-ridden politics of the day, when he shows the invidious relationship between the public and the personal. Not surprisingly, the book picks up when Schuyler and Emma go to Washington, where people eat, live and breathe politics in a dense and febrile atmosphere of corruption; Schuyler learns to be suspicious of his own daughter.

Sarcastically, Vidal suggests widespread sexual impotence as the result of the Panic of 1873—with railroads as compensatory phallic symbols. But *1876* has its own fear: that no one and nothing can ever be trusted again. If Schuyler is a spectator, it is also because everyone is acting as though (and, indeed, because) success depends on it. A pervasive metaphor during the period itself, the idea of theatrical



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duplicity stands Vidal in generous stead; from society drawing-rooms to the floor of the Senate, from political campaigns to the persona of Mark Twain, a pantomime of betrayals is the order of the day. The cityscape America has become is a landscape of *double entendres*; there can be a whorehouse behind every cigar-store Indian, the famed "Astoracracy" is a bunch of boors and bores, and the mansion of a wealthy abortionist stares mockingly across at St. Patrick's Cathedral. These dualities merge into an almost verbatim retelling, in spirit if not in each word, of Henry Adams' political novel, *Democracy* (his Baron Jacobi actually puts in an appearance), a disguise which makes Vidal's cast of literary allusions quite complete.

Charles Schuyler has an insatiable appetite for two things, politics and rich food. With the first, however, he only skims the surface of American life. By consuming the second in huge and graphic quantities, he seems to develop a discomfiting awareness of the innards of the American physique; we are treated *ad nauseam* to the dyspeptic belchings of several prominent gentlemen. By their stomachs shall ye know them? Vidal never achieves a happy median between superficiality and schatological depths. Schuyler, a confirmed glutton, condemns Americans for being overweight, American society for being gross, but he, too, can't see his feet for his own obesity.

His America may have been vulgar, but it was also grandiose, magnificent even in the unprecedented confusions, contrasts and contradictions of the era, which made it the prototype of our own. Everything seemed headed in opposite directions; exuberant science was belied by brooding and nostalgic works of art, romance fought realism in literature, the popularity of spiritualistic seances officiated at the birth of William James' philosophy. But Vidal will have none of this, as if a country so crassly prosperous and politically diseased must be culturally and socially lacking—better yet, society and culture do not exist at all. His Schuyler is surrounded by some of the most outrageous, eclectic and weirdly imaginative architecture ever designed; you wouldn't know this from Vidal. Admittedly, "1876" means different things to different people, but I am still puzzled at how Schuyler could visit the wonderful Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition with hardly a comment to show for it. It was an age, too, of great villains. Schuyler's response: querulousness.

The fault lies not with the period but with the vantage point. There isn't any. *Burr* was centered around one figure, Aaron Burr, but in *1876* Vidal can't seem to focus, and the burden of both action and reaction comes to rest on poor Charlie Schuyler whose eye is no longer fresh. He may be the first person to come to the now all-too-familiar realization that "no one can solve all the problems," but he doesn't even pretend to understand them. He would also be the first to say that he should not be the one to stand in the spotlight; he is a likeable enough fellow but not a little dull. Feints at comic relief fall flat. The book cracks parlor-jokes. Its humor, its humanity arise instead at moments of high seriousness, when Schuyler, unlike his compatriots, tries to get at the truth rather than avoid it. "The great leaders," as Henry Adams wrote, "could not be burlesqued; they were more grotesque than ridicule could make them." *1876* remains the voluminous notes and jottings of an old man who, self-exiled, talks mostly to himself. But the glimmers of truth Vidal does filter down from the 1870s are painfully clear and unchanged 100 years later.

Celia Betsky

Celia Betsky is a graduate student in American Studies at Yale.

The Collected Poems 1956-1974 by Edward Dorn

(Four Seasons Foundation; $5)

Slinger by Edward Dorn

(Wingbow Press; $5)

—he will unroll the map of locations

Like his shape-shifting protagonist Gunslinger, that archetypal hero of the Wild West who also happens to be a Greek Sun God and a sophisticated New Philosopher expounding on Heidegger ("Hi! Digger"), the "pre-emption of the ultra-specific," and "Holy xit," Edward Dorn has been unrolling the map of locations for some 20 years now, and the publication of these two books, the first his collected lyric poetry, the second his extraordinary narrative poem *Slinger*, should finally earn Dorn the reputation he deserves as one of a handful of important poets writing in America today.

If Dorn has never been widely known (Richard Howard, for example, does not include him among the "41 leading contemporary poets" discussed in *Alone in America*), the reasons are not hard to find. Dorn began his career at Black Mountain College in the shadow of Charles Olson, his acknowledged master. Both poets were deeply influenced by the geographer Carl Sauer's essay, "The Morphology of Landscape" (1925), deriving from Sauer the conviction that "The thing to be known is the natural landscape. It becomes known through the totality of its forms"—a statement that Dorn uses as the epigraph for his long poem "Idaho Out." In an essay called "What I see in *The Maximus Poems*" (1960), Dorn praises Olson's attempt to give in language a *map* of one place (in this case, Gloucester, Mass.), and Dorn's fourth book (1965) is appropriately called *Geography*, a word he defined in a recent interview for *Contemporary Literature* as "the writing of earth, earth writing."

Yet despite such thematic links, Dorn is really quite unlike Olson; he is, for that matter, quite unlike any poet writing today. To call him a "regional poet" (he refers to himself as "a poet of the West—not by nativity but by orientation"), misses the mark, for his central concerns are metaphysical and have, finally, nothing to do with his chosen region, the American West. Indeed, some of his best poems, written while he was teaching at the University of Essex, are "about" the topography of Oxford and the Cotswolds. Again, it is not particularly helpful to associate Dorn with the San Francisco school or the Beats; unlike Gary Snyder, he seems to have no particular interest in Zen and the East, and despite his use of drug-world *argot* and political invective, his poetry is decidedly more tempered, more detached, more humorous than that of, say, Allen Ginsberg. Finally, and most important, Dorn, as he himself insists, is a narrative poet—an unusual condition today when the norm tends to be the fragmented lyric or open-ended sequence.

What, then, is Dorn's poetry like? "The Rick of Green Wood" (1956), which opens *The Collected Poems*, contains most of Dorn's typical stylistic traits. It begins:

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In the woodyard were green and dry
woods fanning out, behind
a valley below
a pleasure for the eye to go.

Woodpile by the buzzsaw. I heard
the woodsman down in the thicket. I don't
want a rick of green wood, I told him
I want cherry or alder or something
strong
and thin, or thick if dry, but I don't
want the green wood, my wife would die

Her back is slender
and the wood I get must not
bend her too much through the day.

Aye, the wood is some green
and some dry, the cherry thin of bark
cut in July.

My name is Burlingame
said the woodcutter.
My name is Dorn, I said.
I buzz on Friday if the weather cools
said Burlingame, enough of names.

Compare this to Frost's famed "The Woodpile" and Dorn's originality becomes apparent. What begins in low key as a narrative about the purchases of some firewood is made new by Dorn's idiosyncratic syntax and lineation, his offbeat rhymes, his peculiar mixture of high and low styles, of realism and fantasy. It makes no sense, for example, for the poet to say, "I don't/ want the green wood, my wife would die," especially since he is himself obviously drawn to it. But the non sequitur underscores Dorn's theme, which is the "pied beauty" and fragility of this special moment in November, before the cold sets in, before things "bend." And so Dorn's pastoral emphasizes uncertainty The preposition "behind" in line two is oddly ambiguous: does it refer to the "woods fanning out" or to "the valley below"? This construction is followed by the phrase, "a pleasure for the eye to go," where we would expect the verb "to see"; and the laconic free verse pattern of the opening line is broken by the exact rhyme "below" / "go." Dorn has a habit of introducing rhymes where we least expect them; note the buried internal rhymes, "dry" / "die" / "July"; "slender" / "bend her"; "Burlingame" / "names." Especially interesting is the abrupt shift from shorthand sentences like "Woodpile by the buzzsaw," to the lyric archaism of "Aye, the wood is some green / and some dry," to the down-to-earth colloquial tone of the Burlingame passage, which modulates, in turn, into the high lyric mode of the poem's conclusion, with its slow stately

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rhythms and verbal repetitions:

Out of the thicket my daughter was walking
singing—
backtracking the horse hoof
gone in earlier this morning, the woodcutter's horse
pulling the alder, the fir, the hemlock
above the valley
in the november
air, in the world, that was getting colder
as we stood there in the woodyard talking
pleasantly, of the green wood and the dry.

The one Dorn "signature" absent from "The Rick of Green Wood" but very important in the poetry is his wonderful sense of humor, sometimes black humor as in "The Hide of my Mother," sometimes delicate irony as in "Time to Burn," a witty account of the morning-after-the-night-before, when the poet's girl is making up to the local swell in a small town bar, and he must mark time in what seems like "3 days to midnight." Dorn's sense of the comic absurdity of ordinary situations is nowhere more evident than in "The First Note (From London)," which describes the reaction of the poet and his wife to the peculiar intimacy and sense of enclosure of British trains:

We got into one of those old coaches
which has no access
forward or back but is self contained
and it was strained being so enclosed and locked off
by the speed of passage, alone
and even though
she was my wife we flirted
almost, we were almost in our confusion shy
scarcely believing our situation so sealed off.

We considered of course making it then and there
while moving

but settled for a quiet kiss when halfway through it
abruptly and to our amazement
we found ourselves in some small station smiling
into the equally smiling face
of a railway man idling
on that minor and unremembered platform, nonetheless
we were sober and chaste
and slightly disappointed
from thence to Croyden . . .

Here the effect of geography on human behavior is rendered with delicate irony. The American husband and wife, unfamiliar with the custom of the country, and not quite knowing whether to take advantage of "a situation so sealed off," ultimately become as "sober and chaste and slightly disappointed" as the landscape through which they travel. Smiling into the "equally smiling face" of the railway man, they blend into the topography.

Dorn is less successful when he tries to incorporate history into his poems. "The Land Below," for example, contains fine passages anatomizing the landscape of Taos, with its Fourth of July picnic in the Plaza, its tourist carrying travel kits bearing Christ's image and jostling with the native Indians. But when Dorn tries to relate this landscape of Schliemann's Troy, the Troy of Hector, the results are not happy, for Dorn lacks Pound's ability to revivify historical material, to make it part of the ongoing present. His is the lyric of geography, not of history. Accordingly, his overtly political poems are often simplistic and one-dimensional: "Whit Sunday," which begins with the lines, "England beware / the cliff of 1945 / turns a natural insularity / into a late, and out of joint / naturalism of inbred / industrial indecision," is invective rather than poetry.

Yet in the same years that Dorn was writing such angry political poems, he also composed some of the freshest, most natural love poems of our time—lyrics full of warmth, wit and gentle self-deprecation. In "Song" (1967), he recalls a girl met only once in England and realizes wistfully that although he was no more than "An occupier / Of one of the waves of her intensity," his wrist still bears "The banding of her slightsmiling lassitude." "Slightsmiling lassitude" neatly sums up the comic futility of the poet's love. The 24 "Love Songs" of 1969, which must be read as a sequence, are full of such witty wordplay and nuance.

But charming as Dorn's short lyrics are, in terms of scope and accomplishment, they must take second place to *Slinger*, Dorn's four-part epic poem begun in 1968, which is, I believe, one of the masterpieces of contemporary poetry. In the little New Mexico town of Mesilla, the narrator ("I") meets "The Cautious Gunslinger / of impeccable personal smoothness / and slender leather encased hands / folded casually / to make his knock." "I" sets out on a quest, ostensibly for "Hughes / Howard" but actually for something nameless, with this mysterious sharpshooter, his talking horse, his sometime mistress, the whorehouse madam, Lil, and a travelling bard known only as "The Poet." Other characters appear and disappear, but plot and characterization are subordinated throughout to Dorn's theme, which is the opaqueness of language, the mystery of human identity, the impossibility of getting meaningful answers to one's questions. At one point, "I" asks Gunslinger: "What does the foregoing mean?" To which Slinger replies, "*Mean*?/ Questioner, you got some strange / obsessions, you want to know / what something *means* after you've seen it, after you've been there / or were you *out* during / That time? No. / And you want some *reason*."

To *mean*, in Gunslinger's world, is "a mortal sin," and "I" is always getting into trouble because he is "constructed of questions," wanting to know who's

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who, what's happening, and why. Gunslinger won't have it: "The mortal can be described," he insists, "That's all mortality is / in fact." There are no laws governing the universe, no abstract principles: "never mind he said, are these/men men . . . . Is my horse a horse?" And indeed, how can one tell? For when, in a wonderfully absurd sequence, the horse gets stoned, he turns into Claude Lévi-Strauss and informs the perplexed narrator that he studies "the savage mind." "The Horse," says Slinger wryly, "is a double agent."

If Book I were just a clever attack on current hermeneutic theories, it would soon become tiresome, but Dorn's feat is that he incorporates his phenomenological esthetic into the frame of the familiar Western. The "STRUM" of the guitar punctuates all events and movements, and the characters perform ordinary human functions just when we least expect it. In Book I, for example, Slinger announces loftily that "Time is more fundamental than space" and then "goes into the desert to pee." "*Yes,* he reflected / when he returned, that's less." The poem accommodates both the realistic low-class conversation of Lil (*"Shit, Slinger! you still got that / marvelous creature, and who is this / funny talker, you pick him up / in some sludgy seat of higher/learnin, Creeps! you always did / hang out with some curious refugees"*) and the mock-heroic Houyhnhnm—like talk of Horse, who rebukes the narrator with the words, "Mortal, what do you mean . . .?" It also contains a number of parody Western ballads like the Poet's *"Song about a woman"*:

On a plane of this plain
stood a dark colonnade
which cast its black shadows
in the form of a conception made
where I first saw your love
her elbows at angles

her elbows at black angles

her mouth
a disturbed tanager, and
in her hand an empty dmajuana
on her arm an emotion
on her ankle a band
a slender ampersand. . . .

Homonyms, puns, nonsense words, coinages, archaisms, jingly rhymes, ballad tunes, guitar notes, abstract nouns embedded in prepositional phrases—*Gunslinger* is a collage of all these things. The epigraph for Book III is "The inside real / and the outside-real";

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and when Gunslinger regards "the stereoscopic world," he is "astoned," while Lil rebukes him for his *"hostyle talk."* The poem's form perfectly embodies Dorn's theme that nothing is what it seems to be. "Only appearance. Perceive / not know." Indeed, one cannot *know* anyone else because, as Dorn explains in the interview, today "the ego is pretty obviously dead." Names like "Heidegger" are not used referentially; rather, they function as "widely understood and widely evokable intellectual signs" that "don't really mean anything."

In Book II, the Poet announces that "I is dead." "I" must disappear because he is too rational, too logical and human to participate in Gunslinger's bizarre quest journey. But even this disappearance is not meant to be taken too seriously. Lil's only response to the news is "That ain't grammatical, poet." And in Book III "I" is allowed to return "from the cultural collective," purged of his questioning spirit. He "comes through the door" of the Café Sahagun in downtown Cortez, Colorado, "twirling his psychognosis / in his fingers / and throws it at affective intervals / into the air / like a texas cheerleader."

The quest, not surprisingly, leads nowhere. In an unnamed desert, the pilgrims part company. Slinger (now Zlinger) addresses his friends in a marvelous parody of English poets, beginning with Keats:

Keen, fitful gusts are whispering here
and there
The mesas quiver above the withdrawing
sunne
Among the bushes half leafless and dry
The smallest things now have their time
The stars look very cold about the sky
And I have grown to love your local star
But now niños, it is time for me to go
inside
I must catch the timetrain
The parabolas are in sympathy. . . .

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Lil ("Dear Lillian") goes back to Wyoming; the Poet announces that he is "Moving to Montana soon / going to be a nose spray tycoon"; and "I" is given a last warning by Slinger:

Goodbye I, keep your eye
on the local species
they're nothing
but a warehouse full of peanuts

Slinger runs to more than 200 pages (maddeningly unnumbered!), and there are inevitably some dull stretches, particularly in "The Cycle" (Book III), which often seems too abstract, too clever in its parodies of Blake, and its allusions to modern physics and Parmenides. Dorn himself recognizes that the later books are more abstract than the first, which is filmlike in its intensity. But *Slinger* is surely one of the most ambitious and interesting long poems of our time, a truly original cowboy-and-Indian saga, rendered in the most ingenious mix of scientific jargon, Structuralist terminology, junkie slang, Elizabethan sonneteering, Western dialect, and tough talk about kicking "a gorilla in the balls." Indeed, the real hero of *Slinger* is neither Gunslinger nor the curious "I" but language itself, the language of our time, refracted, distorted, heightened, but always recognizable as the jumble of speech we hear around us and see in print. When, at the end of the poem, Slinger announces his departure:

But it grieves me in some slight way
because this has been such fine play
and I'll miss this marvellous acciden-
talism

the reader can only agree. The "fine play" of *Slinger*—its "marvellous accidentalism"—is quite literally *horse play*, but horse play so learned and witty that it makes most of our long poetic sequences, with their obsessive confessional momentum, look like child's play. In Book II, Gunslinger and his party come across an ingenious machine called a *Literate Projector*, which turns 35 mm. film into script rather than vice-versa. Like this *Literate Projector*, Dorn's comic epic "will Invent a whole new literachure / which was Already There."

Marjorie Perloff

Marjorie Perloff is professor of English at the University of Maryland and author most recently of *Rhyme & Meaning in the Poetry of Yeats* (Humanities).

Correspondence

The Brainwashed Heiress

To the editors:

In your issue of March 6, 1976, Thomas Szasz revealed his ignorance of the considerable psychiatric literature on coercive persuasion and traumatic neurosis ("Some Call it Brainwashing"). In your March 13 issue ("Mercenary Psychiatry") he demonstrated a disregard for truth that can only be considered dishonest if he knew the facts, or dishonorable if he chose not to learn them. For example, Szasz refers to me as a forensic psychiatrist, or testimony-chaser; in fact I have testified at only three trials in more than 25 years as a psychiatrist. Szasz declares that my testimony was purchased by the Hearst family in the case of their daughter, Patricia; in fact I have never in my life accepted a fee for testimony or consultation in a criminal trial.

I examined Patricia Hearst as one of the panel of four (with Drs. Donald T. Lunde, Seymour Pollack and Margaret Thaler Singer) appointed by Judge Oliver J. Carter in September, 1975, prior to her trial. Each of us independently found Ms. Hearst to be legally sane but psychiatrically impaired and in need of treatment. Each of us was available to either prosecution or defense; our reports went to both. When he requested my assistance I advised Judge Carter that I had written a sympathetic letter to the Hearst family—one of thousands they received from strangers like myself—in June, 1974 (*not* 1975 as stated by Szasz). The Judge asked me to serve anyway, in the legitimate expectation that a psychiatrist can be both objective and honest. For years Szasz has been notorious for shrill polemics crying that psychiatrists are neither.

The two distinguished psychiatrists who *were* engaged by the Hearst defense (Professors Robert J. Lifton of Yale and Martin T. Orne of Penn) are men of such professional accomplishment and impeccable character that scurrilous suggestions about their motives can only reflect on the source. Were I, like Szasz, a psychoanalyst, I might propose that his renegade view of such colleagues as biased, dishonest or venal is merely a projection—seeing in others that which is present but not admitted in the self. But a simpler explanation may

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suffice. Szasz has been cashing in for years by selling books, articles and lectures to those who are willing to pay for slick antipsychiatric diatribes. "Mercenary Antipsychiatry" would have been a better title for his latest bit of meretricious nonsense. As long as there is someone foolish enough to buy it, Szasz is eager to sell it. Call it Szasz for the goose.

Louis Jolyon West, M.D.
Los Angeles, California

To the editors:
Thomas Szasz ("Some Call it Brainwashing," *TNR*, March 6, '76) has misquoted Sir Henry Wotton's remark about ambassadors, and thereby ruined the second most brilliant pun in the English language. Wotton defined an ambassador as "an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country." Dr. Szasz, by inverting the adverb and the verb, has turned something supremely witty into something merely cynical.

Samuel McCracken
Newton, Massachusetts

To the editors:
In stating that when we use the term "brainwashing" in place of "one person influencing another" we merely express our disapproval of the influence, Thomas Szasz, in his article "Some Call it Brainwashing" (*TNR*, March 6) ignores the fundamental characteristic of "brainwashing," *i.e.*, the fact that the individual is initially brought against his will and by force under the influence of the persuader.

Thus, subsequent modified behavior follows directly from the initial coercion for which the individual bears no responsibility.

Claude W. Nash
Medford, Massachusetts

To the editors:
Thank you for Thomas Szasz' articles against forensic psychiatry (*TNR*, March 6 & 13). Many would like (to paraphrase Shakespeare) for "all the world to be in love with psychiatry and pay no worship to the garish truth." The trial of Patty Hearst shows the flippant attitudes in our social institutions today. At least Dr. Szasz has had the courage to speak out.

Stephen Housman
Fort Lee, New Jersey

Economic Logic

To the editors:
Your issue of March 6 has the ingredients for an interesting exercise in formal logic:

Proposition A. Economists are always wrong (source: J.K. Galbraith, as summarized by your headline).

Proposition B. Galbraith is an economist (after all, he let himself be elected President of the American Economic Association).

Proposition C. Therefore, Galbraith is always wrong. But Proposition C implies that Proposition A, which Galbraith asserts, is false, and should be replaced by

Proposition A. Not all economists are always wrong.*

This substitution does not invalidate Proposition C. It is not economists in general who are always wrong, just Galbraith. Paradox resolved.

Why, specifically, is Galbraith wrong about price controls, the main issue in his review of Lekachman's book? Because he misinterprets the Korean War controls, which he helped administer. In January, 1951, prices were frozen several months after they had gone through the roof. With nearly all the inflationary pressure spent, the controls could not help but appear successful.

The situation in 1972-73 was quite different. President Nixon became a Galbraithian on August 15, 1971, adopting price controls and proceeding to win the 1972 election. For this triumph Galbraith could claim full credit were it not for the aftermath of the 1970 recession, which kept inflation down. By the fall of 1972 the economy was heating up again, and wholesale prices rose despite the controls. Those economists (both Democrat and Republican) who, unlike Galbraith, look at the facts, knew that the controls had failed, and advised accordingly. Unfortunately they did not wait for the truth to sink in, and there are still too many who, following Galbraith, believe that controls are the answer to our problems. The true answer is competition, something for which he has long had a blind spot.

Hendrik S. Houthakker
Professor of Economics

In reply:
My distinguished colleague Professor Houthakker's exercise in formal logic is a rediscovery of that old chestnut, the Cypriot paradox—of how truth and error became jumbled when the King of Cyprus proclaimed that all Cypriots are liars. However, it doesn't quite fit. It was the editor of *The New Republic* who wrote the headline saying economists are always wrong. Had I done so, I would have allowed for obvious exceptions, including my friend and colleague, although that would have involved a certain measure of conflict between truth and affection.

Your readers will not, I think, overlook the sensational chain of hypotheses by which Professor Houthakker sustains his case. Although the Korean inflation ended when the controls were applied in 1951, it would, he asserts, have ended anyway. Inflation ended with Nixon's controls in 1971 but as the aftermath of the antecedent recession, that inflation would have ended anyway. There was a run-away inflation when the controls were lifted in 1973. That inflation, he asserts, would have come anyway. Inflation could be arrested in the future by restoring competition, which I judge to mean eliminating the market power that goes with strong unions and strong corporations. But that too will never be known, for it will never happen. Would any reader wish to risk even an appendectomy—for himself, that is—on such medical evidence?

On only one matter can Professor Houthakker be made subject to the test of fact—his assertion that my belief in the need for controls derives from my experience in helping to administer them in the Korean War. This could not be so, for I had no part whatever in the effort.

John Kenneth Galbraith

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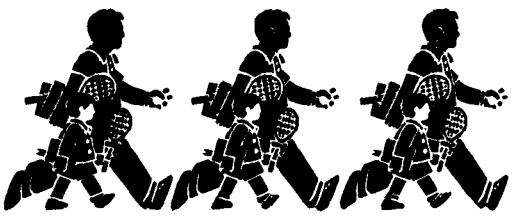

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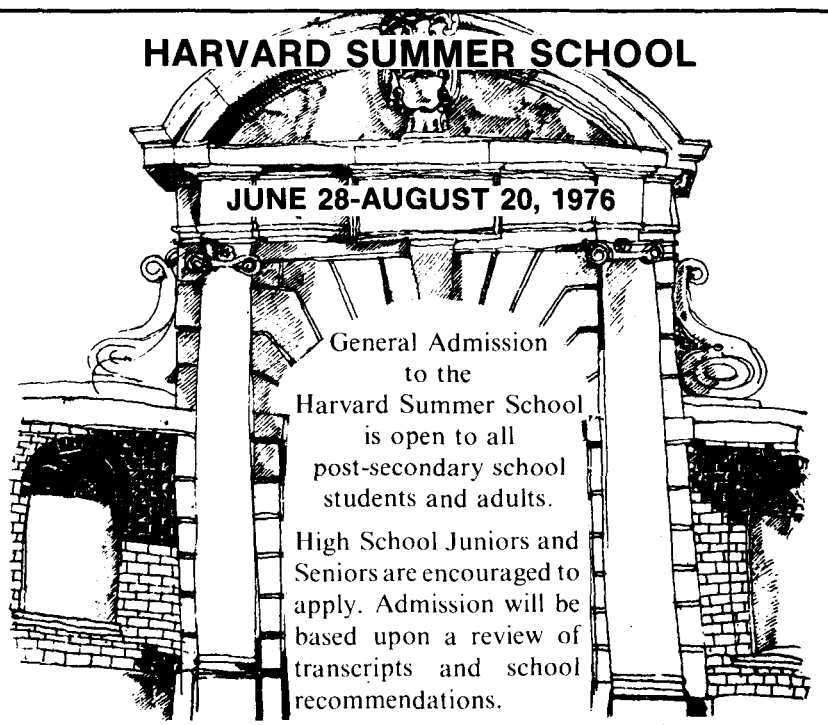

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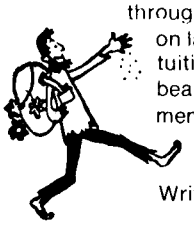

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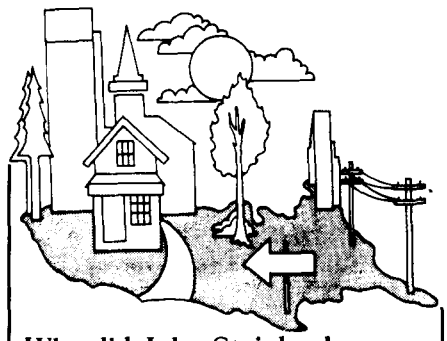

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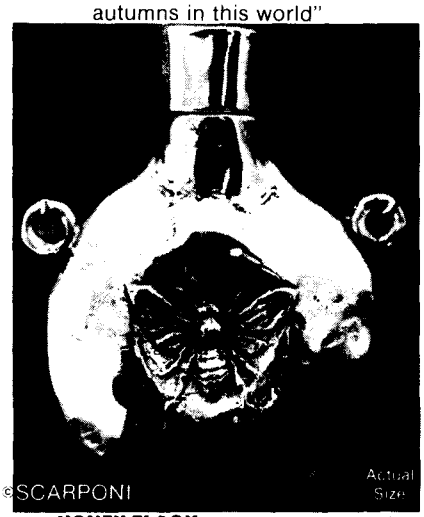

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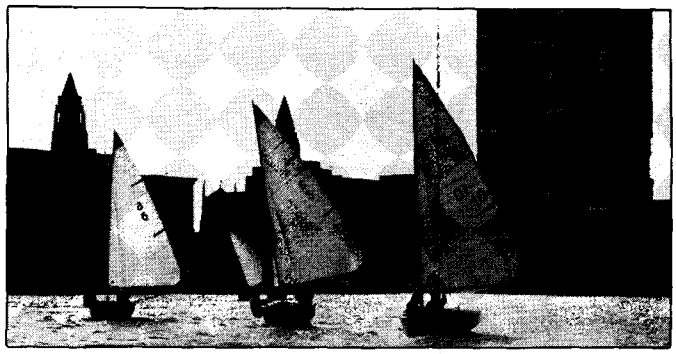

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